●作者の素顔

★3月15日、うお座生まれ。A型。山梨県出身。1986年、第2回なかよし新人まんが賞入選の「ラブコール」で、「なかよしデラックス」(1986年9月号)よりデビュー。

代表作は、「チョコレート・クリスマス」「ウインク・レイン」「プリズムタイム」など。

趣味は、デート。好物は、コーンクリームスープ。

Kodansya Comics

624

チョコレート・クリスマス

●ウインク・レイン

KC

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Kodansya Comics nakayosi

KC

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♥恋人と2人でクリスマスをすごしたいと夢見るりょんのイブは，いつもひとりぼっち。そんなとき，ふと聞いたラジオからDJチョコさんの声……。りょんはひと目ぼれならぬひと聞きぼれ!? フワフワとりょんの恋も舞いはじめたの！

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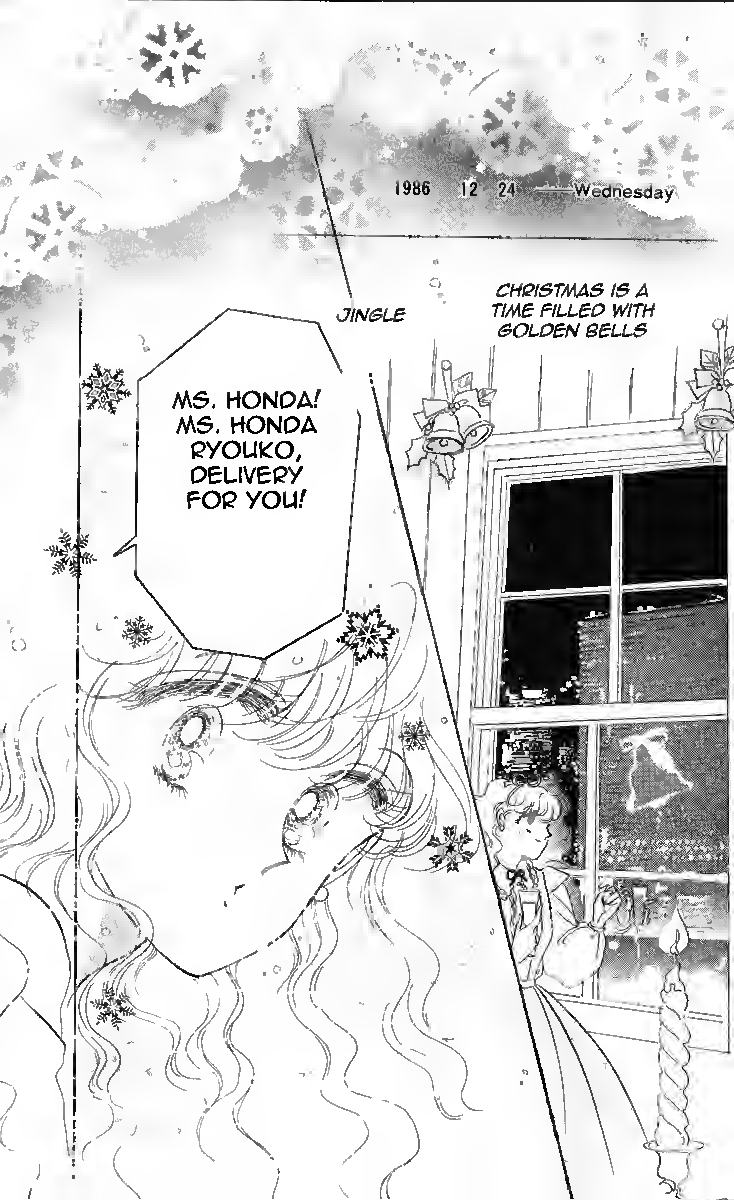
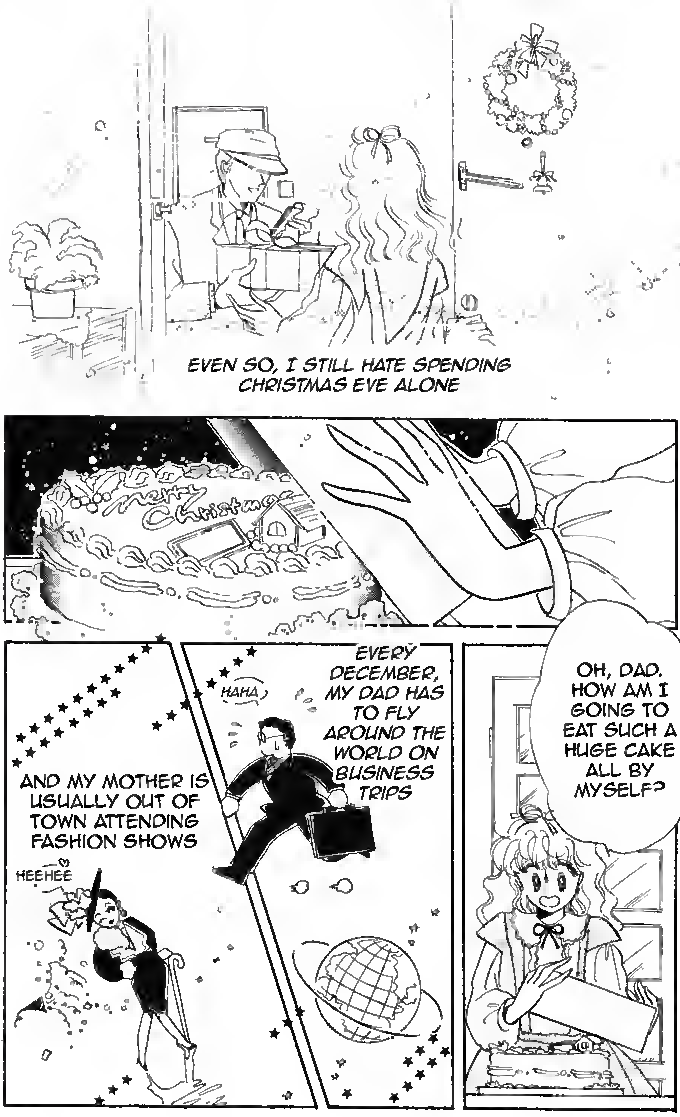
チョコレート・クリスマス

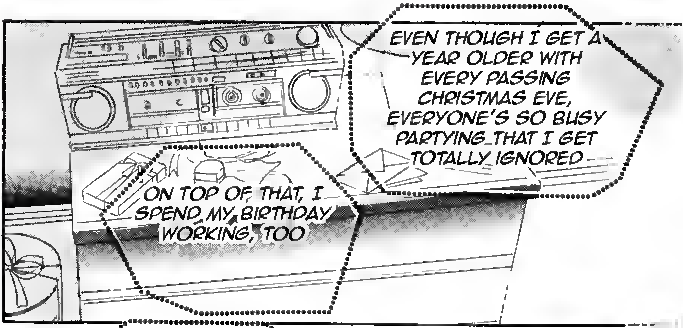
●ウインク・レイン……85

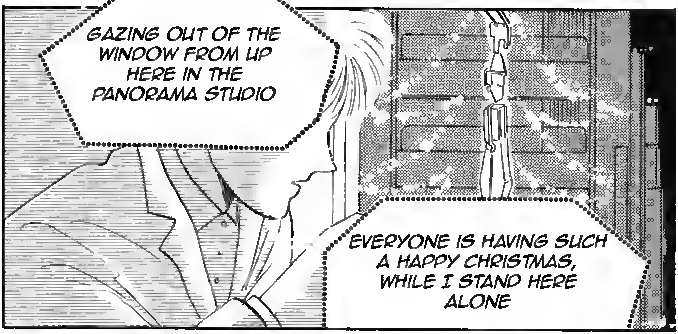
dear god
please grant my wish
this christmas
He definitely will

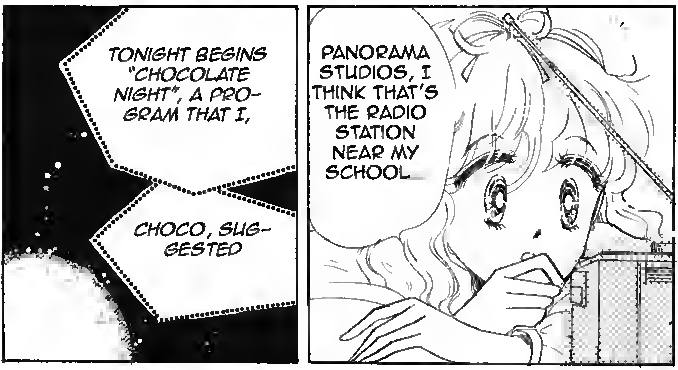

1986 12 24 Wednesday
JINGLE
CHRISTMAS IS A TIME FILLED WITH GOLDEN BELLS
MS. HONDA! MS. HONDA RYOUKO, DELIVERY FOR YOU!


EVEN SO, I STILL HATE SPENDING CHRISTMAS EVE ALONE
Merry Christmas
EVERY DECEMBER, MY DAD HAS TO FLY AROUND THE WORLD ON BUSINESS TRIPS
HAHA
AND MY MOTHER IS USUALLY OUT OF TOWN ATTENDING FASHION SHOWS
HEEHEE
OH, DAD. HOW AM I GOING TO EAT SUCH A HUGE CAKE ALL BY MYSELF?

HEY, DID YOU KNOW?
CHOCOLATE NIGHT IS HAVING A LIVE BROADCAST ON ITS ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY CHRISTMAS EVE
NO WAY
THAT'S AWESOME!
THAT'S SO ROMANTIC


EVEN THOUGH I GET A YEAR OLDER WITH EVERY PASSING CHRISTMAS EVE, EVERYONE'S SO BUSY PARTYING THAT I GET TOTALLY IGNORED
ON TOP OF THAT, I SPEND MY BIRTHDAY WORKING, TOO


GAZING OUT OF THE WINDOW FROM UP HERE IN THE PANORAMA STUDIO
EVERYONE IS HAVING SUCH A HAPPY CHRISTMAS, WHILE I STAND HERE ALONE

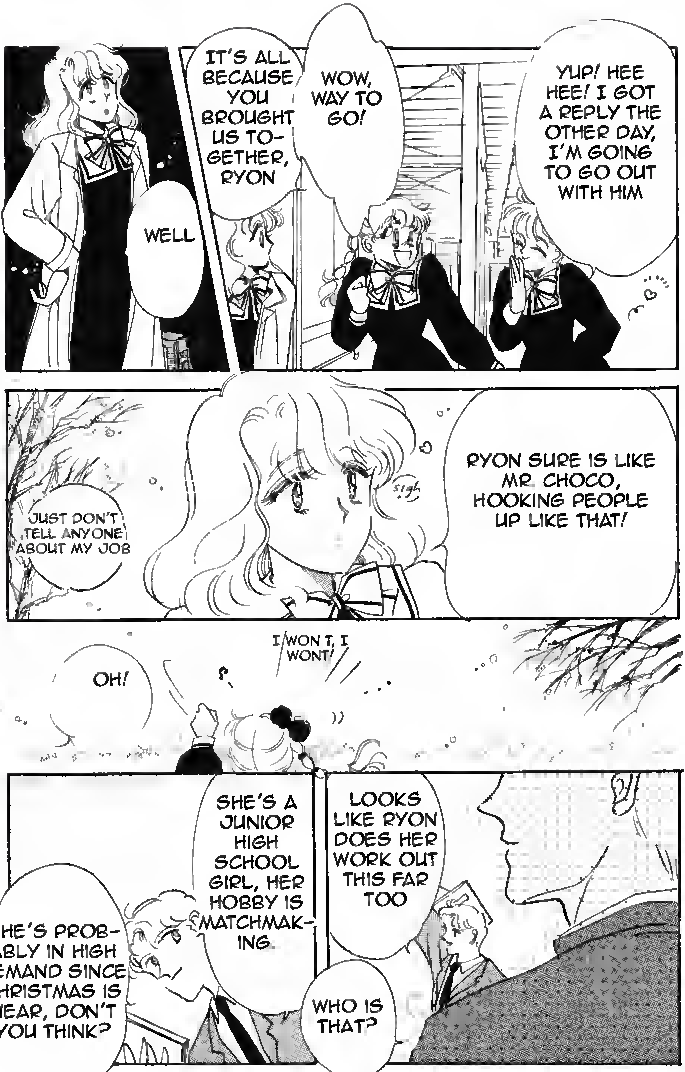

TONIGHT BEGINS "CHOCOLATE NIGHT", A PROGRAM THAT I,
CHOCO, SUGGESTED
PANORAMA STUDIOS, I THINK THAT'S THE RADIO STATION NEAR MY SCHOOL

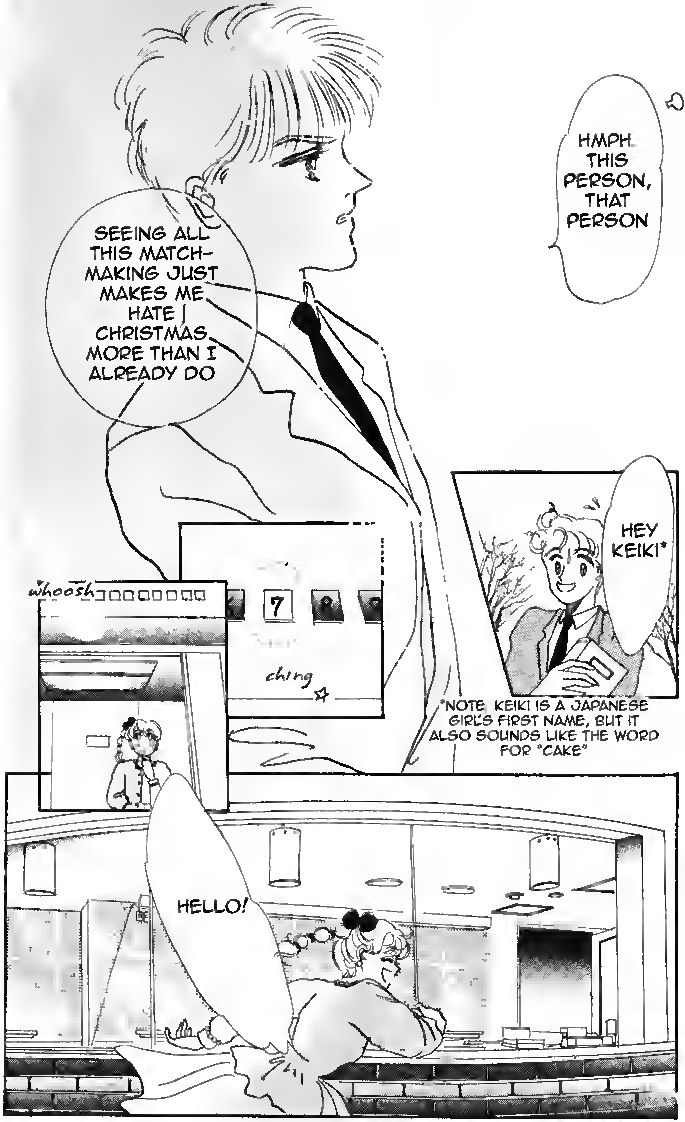
wow!
ha
ah ha ha
chatter
chatter
gasp
step
CHRISTMAS IS A DAY THAT SHOULD BE SPENT TOGETHER BY LOVERS
MY MISSION IS TO BRING COUPLES TOGETHER, SO THAT NEXT CHRISTMAS EVE
I'LL HAVE SOMEONE TO SPEND IT WITH

AHH!
STUDIO
PANORAMA
UM, ARE YOU ON THE AIR NOW?
fwoosh
I JUST WANTED TO GIVE THIS TO THE DJ
TO WISH HIM A "HAPPY BIRTHDAY"

A year later
1987 12. ——
MS. MAKKIKO!
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO MEET MR. CHOCO!!
H-HEY, LISTEN, I UM, MIGHT BE ABLE TO
HEH HEH, WELL, YOU KNOW...
thud
MORNIN' RYON
IS MR. CHOCO THAT DJ YOU GAVE THAT CAKE TO LAST YEAR ON CHRISTMAS?
THE COLD DOESN'T SEEM TO FAZE YOU AT 'ALL, RYON

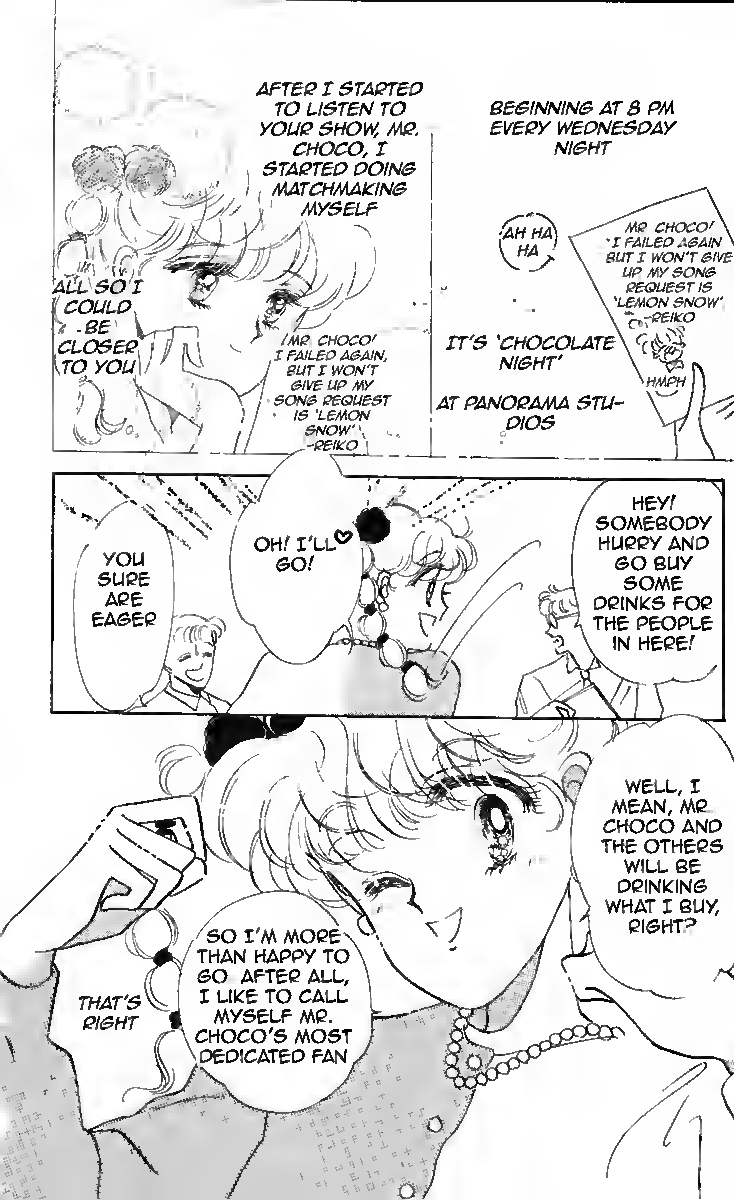
SHHH, SHH, DON'T ACT SO CRAZY
YOU STARTED A PART TIME JOB?!
BUT WE'RE STILL IN JUNIOR HIGH!
RYON!
ANYWAY I GOT A JOB IN THE MAIL ROOM FOR MR. CHOCO'S PROGRAM, SO MEETING HIM MAY NOT BE JUST A DREAM FOR MUCH LONGER!
OH, IS THAT...?
I DON'T FEEL RIGHT GOING THERE ALONE
HEY, WOULD YOU COME WITH ME TO THE HIGH SCHOOL?

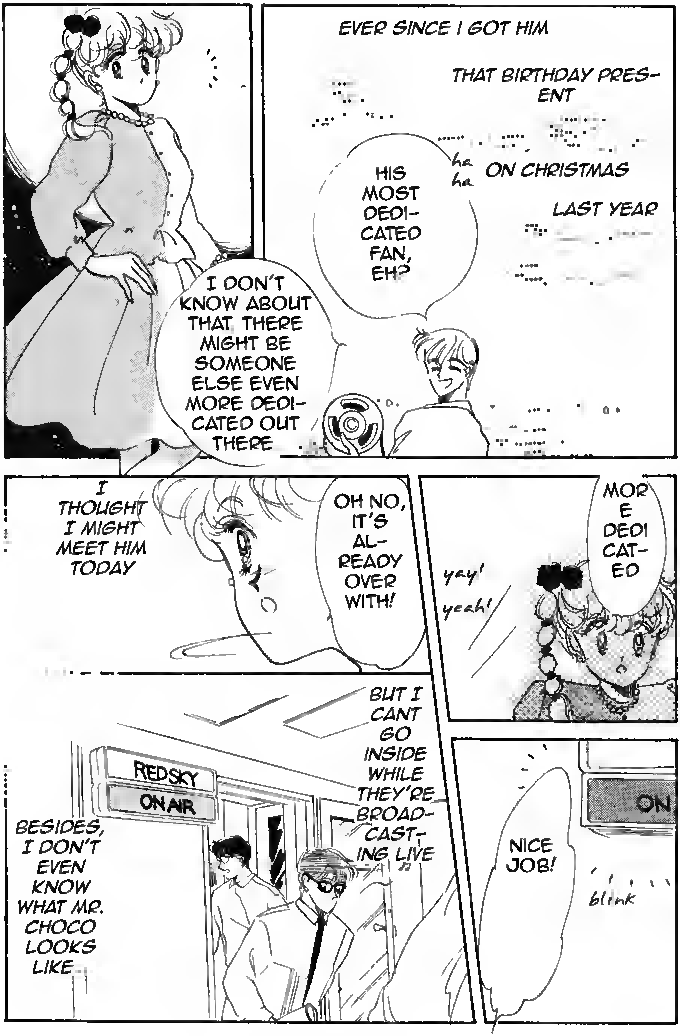

YUP! HEE HEE! I GOT A REPLY THE OTHER DAY, I'M GOING TO GO OUT WITH HIM
WOW, WAY TO GO!
IT'S ALL BECAUSE YOU BROUGHT US TOGETHER, RYON
WELL
RYON SURE IS LIKE MR. CHOCO, HOOKING PEOPLE UP LIKE THAT!
Sigh
JUST DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT MY JOB
I WON'T, I WON'T!
OH!
LOOKS LIKE RYON DOES HER WORK OUT THIS FAR TOO
SHE'S A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GIRL, HER HOBBY IS MATCHMAKING.
WHO IS THAT?
SHE'S PROBABLY IN HIGH DEMAND SINCE CHRISTMAS IS NEAR, DON'T YOU THINK?



*NOTE: KEIKI IS A JAPANESE GIRL'S FIRST NAME, BUT IT ALSO SOUNDS LIKE THE WORD FOR "CAKE"

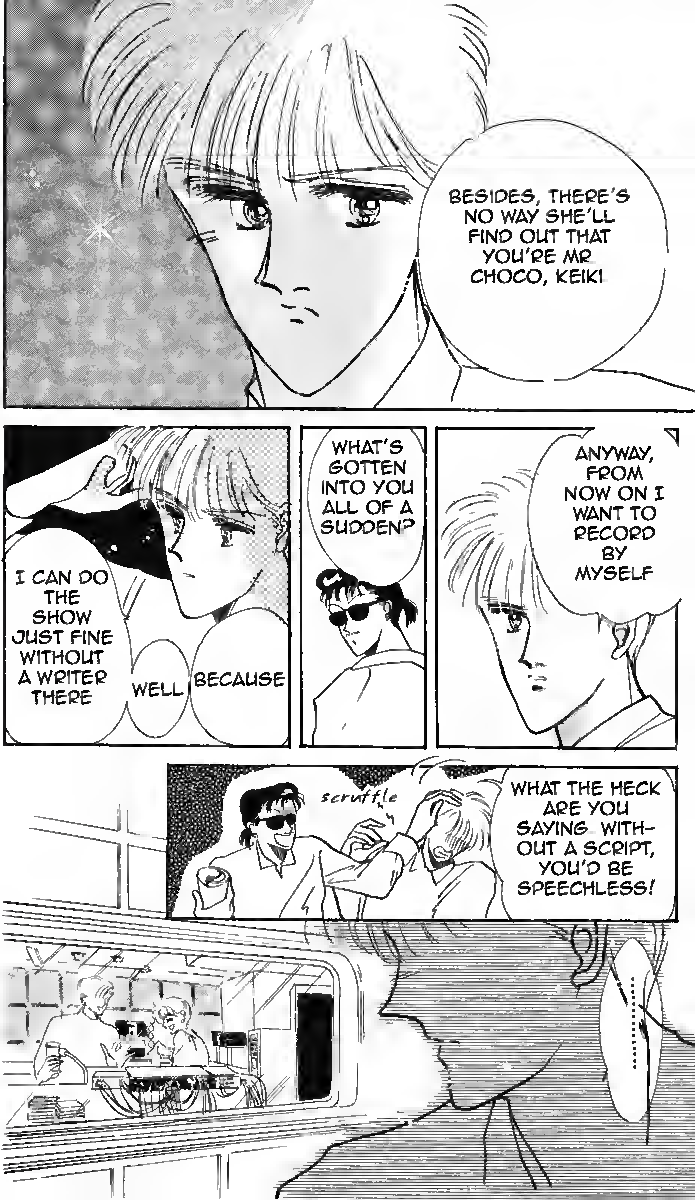
RYON, YOU CAN'T LEAVE DURING THE RECORDING SINCE IT'S DONE LIVE, THE BROADCAST BEGINS AT 8 PM
OH, BUT ISN'T THAT A GOOD THING? AREN'T YOU HAPPY HE CHOSE YOU OVER HER?
OH I SEE SO HE LEFT THE GIRL HE WAS SEEING JUST TO DATE YOU? WOW
OH BOY, IT'S ALREADY STARTING
ON AIR
YO, RYON, YOU'RE LATE!
WELL, I'M SURE IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
NOW, LET'S GO TO THE REQUEST LINES!
LEAVE IT TO ME
No comment!
MR. CHOCO IS A MAN OF MYSTERY
AH HA HA
HEY, BE SERIOUS
NO WAY ISN'T IT OBVIOUS, HE'S EFFIMINATE? HE LOVES BEING A LOVE ADVICE DJ, AFTER ALL
HUH? I GUESS HE'S JUST ORDINARY, AN ORDINARY GUY
HEY, WHAT IS MR. CHOCO LIKE ANYWAY?


AFTER I STARTED TO LISTEN TO YOUR SHOW, MR. CHOCO, I STARTED DOING MATCHMAKING MYSELF
BEGINNING AT 8 PM EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT
AH HA HA
MR. CHOCO! I FAILED AGAIN BUT I WON'T GIVE UP MY SONG REQUEST IS 'LEMON SNOW' -REIKO
HMPH
ALL SO I COULD BE CLOSER TO YOU
MR. CHOCO! I FAILED AGAIN, BUT I WON'T GIVE UP MY SONG REQUEST IS 'LEMON SNOW' -REIKO
IT'S 'CHOCOLATE NIGHT' AT PANORAMA STUDIOS
YOU SURE ARE EAGER
OH! I'LL GO!
HEY! SOMEBODY HURRY AND GO BUY SOME DRINKS FOR THE PEOPLE IN HERE!
WELL, I MEAN, MR CHOCO AND THE OTHERS WILL BE DRINKING WHAT I BUY, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT
SO I'M MORE THAN HAPPY TO GO AFTER ALL, I LIKE TO CALL MYSELF MR. CHOCO'S MOST DEDICATED FAN


EVER SINCE I GOT HIM
THAT BIRTHDAY PRES-ENT
ON CHRISTMAS
LAST YEAR
ha ha
HIS MOST DEDI-CATED FAN, EH?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT. THERE MIGHT BE SOMEONE ELSE EVEN MORE DEDI-CATED OUT THERE
I THOUGHT I MIGHT MEET HIM TODAY
OH NO, IT'S AL-READY OVER WITH!
MOR E DEDI CAT-ED
yay!
yeah!
BUT I CANT GO INSIDE WHILE THEY'RE BROAD-CAST-ING LIVE ♫
REDSKY
ON AIR
BESIDES, I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT MR. CHOCO LOOKS LIKE...
ON
NICE JOB!
blink

ACK! SORRY!
bang
ACK!!
HE MIGHT BE IN THERE. I WONDER WHAT KIND OF PERSON MR CHOCO REALLY IS
chatter
MR. CHOCO IS A MAN OF MYSTERY...
chatter
ba-dum ba-dum
HUH?
turn
HEY, KEIKI, DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING INSIDE?
H-H-HEY

HUH ?
YOU MEAN RYON? SHE'S THE NEW PART-TIME GIRL HERE
W-WHAT THE ...
H-HANG ON!
THE JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL ARE BOTH ON THE SAME CAMPUS, YOU FOOL! AND THAT GIRL IN PARTICULAR IS ALWAYS COMING TO THE HIGH SCHOOL. YOU HAVE TO MAKE HER QUIT.
YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO DO THAT
IT'LL BE FINE
BUT SHE GOES TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS ME! I TOLD YOU NOT TO HIRE ANYONE ELSE LIKE ME ..!
OH DON'T WORRY. SHE'S IN JUNIOR HIGH


BESIDES, THERE'S NO WAY SHE'LL FIND OUT THAT YOU'RE MR CHOCO, KEIKI
I CAN DO THE SHOW JUST FINE WITHOUT A WRITER THERE
WELL BECAUSE
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN?
ANYWAY, FROM NOW ON I WANT TO RECORD BY MYSELF
scruffle
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU SAYING WITH-OUT A SCRIPT, YOU'D BE SPEECHLESS!
.....

HEY RYON, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
GOING TO THE HIGH SCHOOL AGAIN?
YEAH
WHY, ANOTHER LOVE LETTER?
TO MY CRUSH, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:
1. YEAR OF BIRTH
2. BLOOD TYPE
3. FAVORITE COLOR
4. FAVORITE FOODS
5. YOUR FAVORITE 'TYPE' OF GIRL
I WONDER WHY THIS GIRL IS GOING THIS SLOW INSTEAD OF CONFESSING HER FEELINGS?
M-MAKIKO!
OH IT'S ALL RIGHT EVEN IF I DID NOTHING, THESE TWO WOULD STILL END UP TOGETHER IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME
I'M JUST PUSHING THEM IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION
tap tap
ah ha ha

WHY ARE YOU SO ADAMANT ABOUT STICK-ING YOUR NOSE IN OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS?
FWIP
ACK!
OH, IT'S YOU OOH ARA!
WHAT THE HELL
ANYWAY, THIS IS NONE OF -YOUR- BUSI-NESS
OH?
OH, MAKIKO, YOU KNOW HIM?
UMM, WELL, NOT REALL Y..

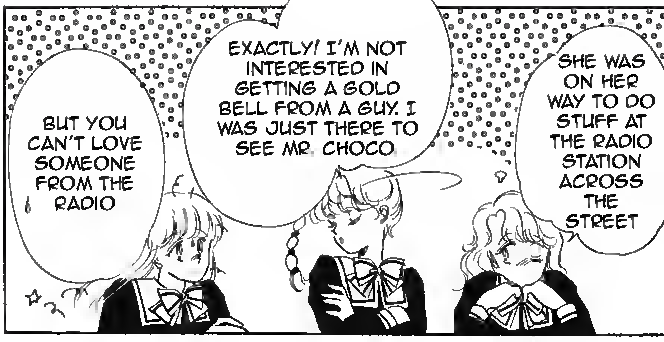
BUT RYON, HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT TO ME WHEN ALL YOU DO IS POKE YOUR NOSE IN OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS?
HOW–
HOW DARE YOU TALK TO ME LIKE YOU KNOW ME! YOU JUST MET ME
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO –
HUH
I THOUGHT I RECOG-NIZED YOU FROM SOME-WHERE!
AREN'T YOU THAT CREEP STARING AT ME AT THE RADIO STA-TION YESTER-DAY?
WAH H!!
W– W– WAIT A MINUT E

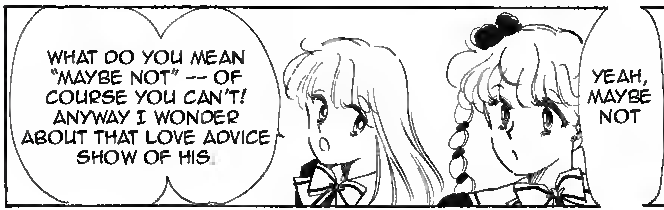
HUH
I SEE. WELL, IF THAT'S THE CASE..
OH YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. ANYWAY, YOU'RE A CHICKEN. I WORK AT THE SAME PLACE AS YOU DO
WHAT ARE YOU -
WOULD YOU LOWER YOUR DAMNED VOICE? IF WORD GETS OUT ABOUT THAT, I COULD GET SUS-PENDED FROM SCHOOL..
OH HO, SO THEN YOU -DO- WORK AT THE RADIO STATION. YOU KNOW, THIS GIRL STARTED MATCHMAK-ING TOO, OUT OF HER ADMIRATION FOR MR CHOCO...
hmph
I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU WAN-DERING OVER TO THE HIGH SCHOOL ANY-MORE TRYING TO GET COUPLES TOGETHER
HOW FOOL-ISH

THAT GUY HAS A BIG OVER-SIZED EGO FROM ALL OF THE PRAISE HE GETS FROM GIRLS ONLY OVER HIS FAKE LOVE ADVICE
THERE'S NOTHING GREAT ABOUT THAT
dash
HEY, RYON!
RYON COME BACK!
OUCH THAT WAS
PAINFUL
gasp
tap
MS. HONDA
HERE

THAT'S NUTS
MS. KAORI IN CLASS 2
RYON. WHO WAS THAT LOVE LETTER THAT GUY GAVE TO YOU FOR?
KAORI IS WAY TOO STUCK UP TO FALL FOR SOMEBODY JUST FROM A STUPID LETTER
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
glare
I'LL SHOW YOU! I'LL GET THEM TOGETHER, NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES!
HEY RELAX, WHY ARE YOU SO UPSET?
RYON, EVEN IF YOU WANT TO MAKE IT HAPPEN, IT WON'T WORK WITHOUT KAORI WANTING IT
RYON, SHIMADA IS CALLING FOR YOU!
THAT GIRL HAS BEEN SO INTENSE LATELY
IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS, SO I BET ITS A BUSY TIME
WHAT DID SHIMADA SAY?
jingle
HERE YOU GO

I WENT UNDER THAT TREE LAST YEAR ON CHRISTMAS EVE!
ISN'T THAT NICE..IF I HAD A BOYFRIEND, I'D GET GOLD BELLS TOO, AND MEET WITH HIM UNDER THE TREE ON CHRISTMAS EVE
WOW, MATCHING GOLD BELLS! YOU TWO MUST BE GETTING ALONG GREAT!
IT WAS SO BEAUTI FUL
THERE WERE A TON OF GIRLS WHO WERE PROBABLY STUDENTS THERE, ALL OF THEM WEARING GOLD BELLS
OH, NO, IT WASN'T LIKE THAT AT ALL!
raining on her parade
NO FAIR! DID YOU MEET SOMEONE THERE? RYON? WHO WAS IT?!


BUT YOU CAN'T LOVE SOMEONE FROM THE RADIO
EXACTLY! I'M NOT INTERESTED IN GETTING A GOLD BELL FROM A GUY. I WAS JUST THERE TO SEE MR. CHOCO
SHE WAS ON HER WAY TO DO STUFF AT THE RADIO STATION ACROSS THE STREET


WHAT DO YOU MEAN "MAYBE NOT" -- OF COURSE YOU CAN'T! ANYWAY I WONDER ABOUT THAT LOVE ADVICE SHOW OF HIS
YEAH, MAYBE NOT

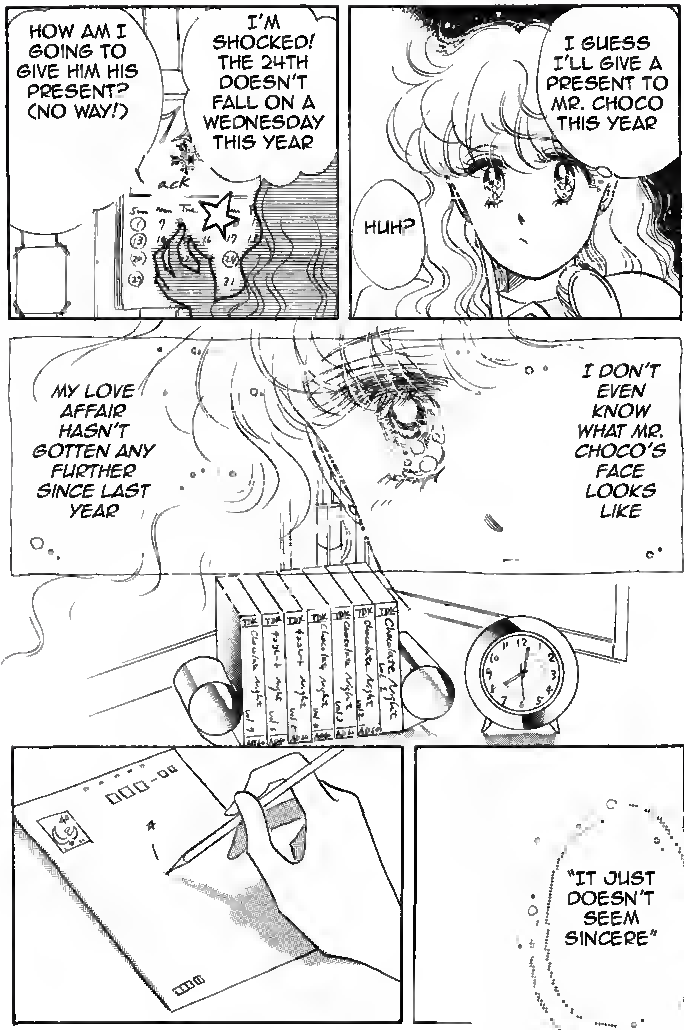
AH
I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO INSULT MR. CHOCO LIKE THAT.

IT JUST DOESN'T FEEL THAT SINCERE

grip
RYON
WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT MR. CHOCO I SUDDENLY REMEMBERED A TIME WHEN I GOT MAD AT THIS GUY
.....
RYON?
KEIKI? WHAT A WEIRD NAME
I WAS SURPRISED, IT LOOKED LIKE YOU TWO WERE ABOUT TO FIGHT
HIS NAME WAS OOHARA KEIKI, THE CLUB LEADER
gasp
AH
THAT'S PROBA BLY WHY
BUT RYON, I'M REALLY HAPPY FOR YOU...TO HEAR YOU TALKING LIKE THIS

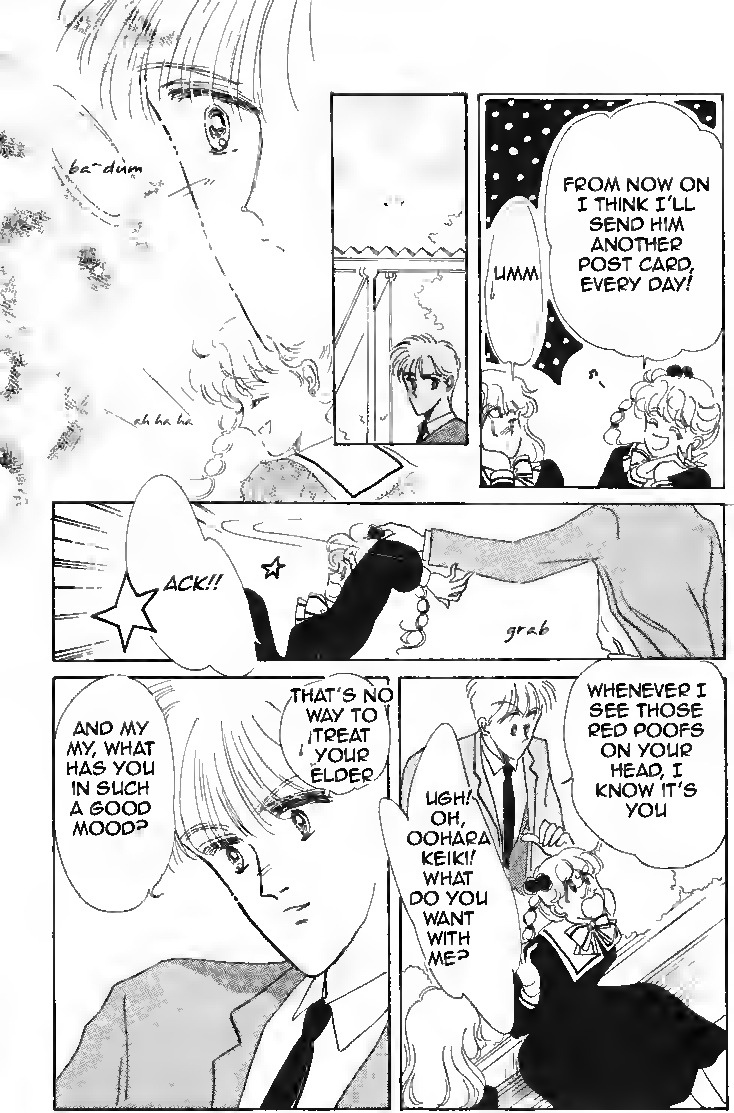
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE SO POPULAR YOURSELF! IS THERE SOMEBODY YOU LIKE? COME ON, YOU CAN TELL ME!
NO, THERE'S NOT
SOUNDS NICE
I GUESS THAT'S WHY BOYS ALWAYS ASK YOU TO HELP THEM BUILD BRIDGES TO START RELATIONSHIPS, RIGHT? AND FOR YOU, IT'S NO PROBLEM TO DO, THERE'S NO HESITATION
IF I HAD YOUR SPIRIT AND BRAVERY, I'D HAVE PLENTY OF GOLD BELLS GIVEN TO ME
BUT MAKIKO, YOU'RE THE ONE I'M ENVIOUS OF
I LOVE IT!
I LOVE OUR SCHOOL'S TRADITION OF GUYS GIVING GIRLS GOLDEN BELLS, AND EVERYONE MEETING TOGETHER UNDER OUR BUILDING'S TREE

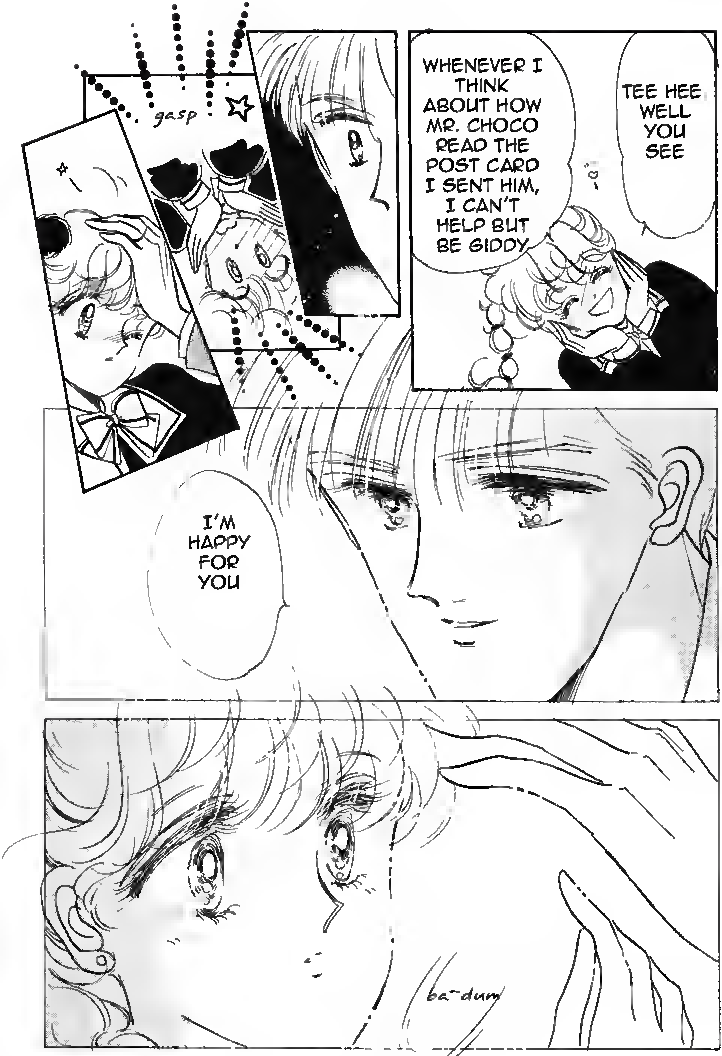
clatter
RYON,
YOU'RE A
LIAR
WHEN YOU
SAY YOU
HAVE NO
INTEREST IN
GETTING A
GOLD BELL
RYON
?
EVEN THOUGH I REALLY
WANT ONE
NO ONE
WILL BE MY
BOYFRIEND
EVEN
THOUGH I
FELL IN
LOVE LAST
CHRISTMAS
EVE


HOW AM I GOING TO GIVE HIM HIS PRESENT? (NO WAY!)
I'M SHOCKED! THE 24TH DOESN'T FALL ON A WEDNESDAY THIS YEAR
I GUESS I'LL GIVE A PRESENT TO MR. CHOCO THIS YEAR
HUH?
MY LOVE AFFAIR HASN'T GOTTEN ANY FURTHER SINCE LAST YEAR
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT MR. CHOCO'S FACE LOOKS LIKE
"IT JUST DOESN'T SEEM SINCERE"

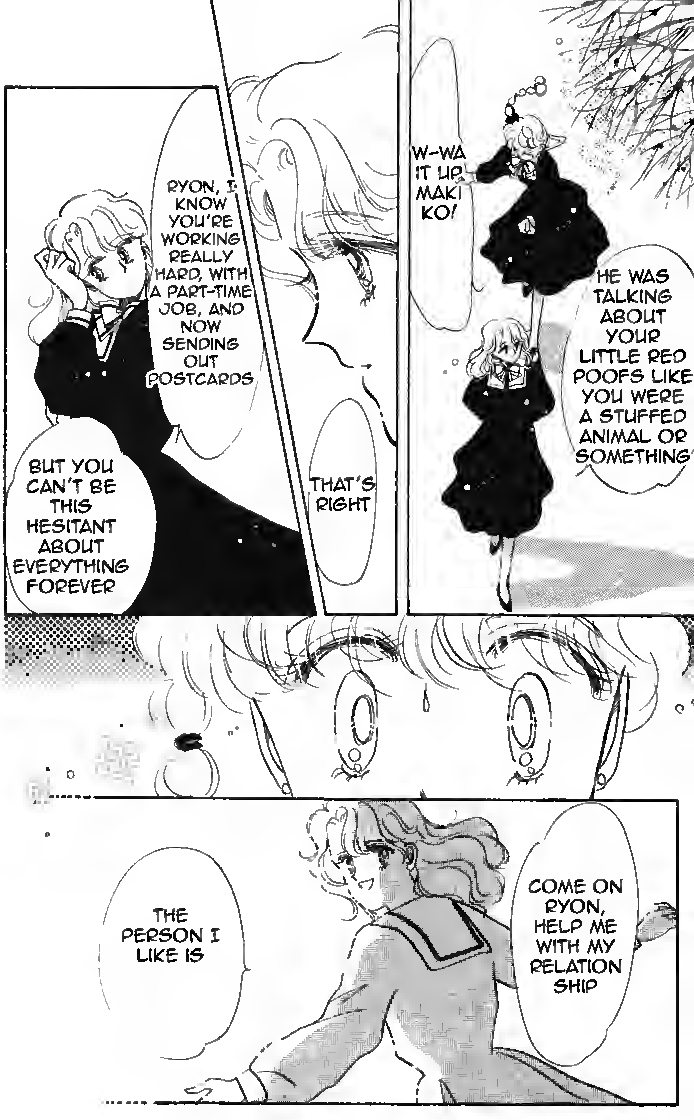
SHOULD I BOTHER WRITING ANOTHER POST CARD?
THE NEXT ONE IS
my love is unrequited it hurts so much
from ryo
gasp
KEIKI! READ IT, READ IT!

MS. RYON OF KOUTOU PREFECTURE
HAS REQUESTED
A SAD LOVE SONG
WHAT, REALLY?!
MR. CHOCO READ YOUR POST CARD?! YOU DID IT, RYON!
YEAH!
I HADN'T THOUGHT OF SENDING HIM A POSTCARD BEFORE, BUT


ba-dum
oh ha ha
FROM NOW ON I THINK I'LL SEND HIM ANOTHER POST CARD, EVERY DAY!
UMM
ACK!!
grab
WHENEVER I SEE THOSE RED POOFS ON YOUR HEAD, I KNOW IT'S YOU
UGH! OH, OOHARA KEIKI! WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?
THAT'S NO WAY TO TREAT YOUR ELDER
AND MY MY, WHAT HAS YOU IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD?


gasp
TEE HEE WELL YOU SEE
WHENEVER I THINK ABOUT HOW MR. CHOCO READ THE POST CARD I SENT HIM, I CAN'T HELP BUT BE GIDDY
I'M HAPPY FOR YOU
ba-dum

IT'S NOT JUST THAT! TO ME, IT SEEMS LIKE A SERIOUS STEP FOR-
IS IT REALLY THAT GREAT, HAVING SOMEONE READ YOUR POST CARD?
I'M GETTI NG CARRI ED AWAY
I
WHENEVER SHE MAKES THAT KIND FACE ...
WHAT ?!
HE MUST HAVE PRETTY STRONG FEELINGS FOR YOU, SEEING HOW HE ALWAYS MAKES AN EXCUSE TO SAY SOMETHING TO YOU


W-WAIT UP, MAKIKO!
HE WAS TALKING ABOUT YOUR LITTLE RED POOFS LIKE YOU WERE A STUFFED ANIMAL OR SOMETHING
RYON, I KNOW YOU'RE WORKING REALLY HARD, WITH A PART-TIME JOB, AND NOW SENDING OUT POSTCARDS
THAT'S RIGHT
BUT YOU CAN'T BE THIS HESITANT ABOUT EVERYTHING FOREVER
COME ON RYON, HELP ME WITH MY RELATION SHIP
THE PERSON I LIKE IS

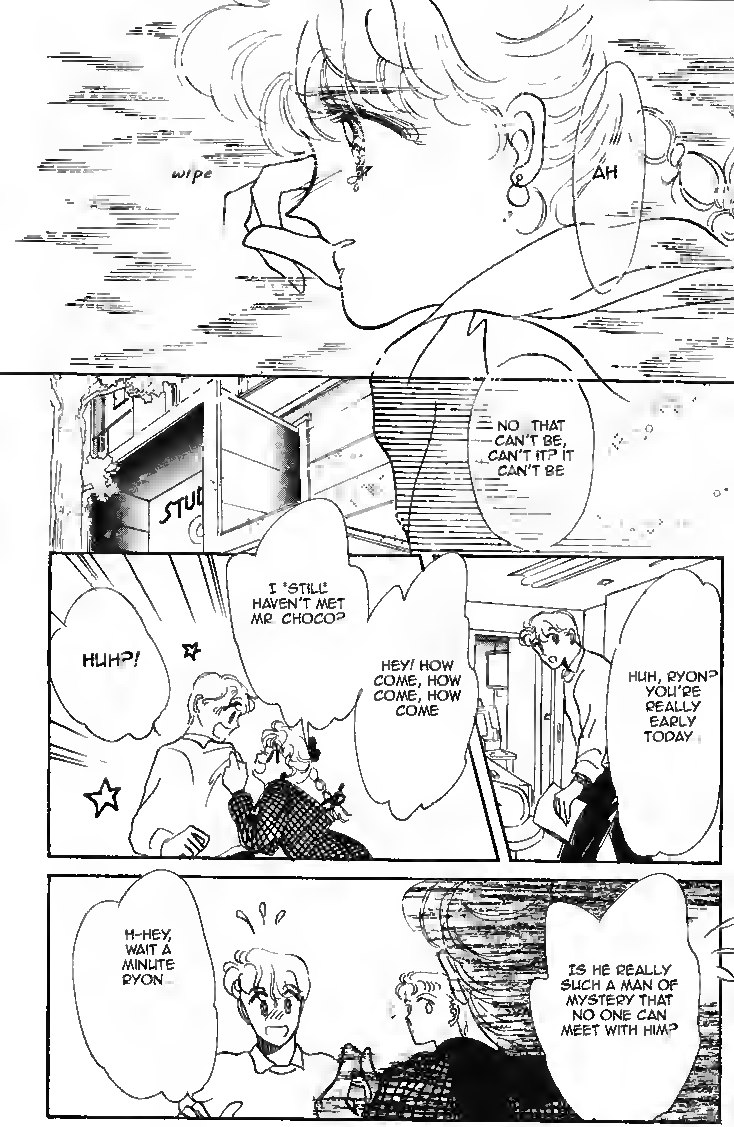
IS OOHARA KEIKI
PAT
RA-OUM
WELL
I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT HOW NICE IT'D BE
WHAT ARE YOU DOING STOPPING HERE?
ON YOUR WAY TO WORK?
YOU SURPRISED ME I DIDN'T KNOW WHO IT WAS
AH
AH, A GOLD BELL
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE YOU GO, ALL OF CHRISTMAS IS A BLUR OF THE SAME COLOR
CAW
CHIRP
THAT'S WHY I HATE THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

THIS MIGHT SOUND BAD
BUT DON'T LUMP ME IN WITH YOUR LOT
I GUESS WE'RE IN THE SAME SITUATION
THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S A LONELY MONTH FOR A SINGLE GUY, RIGHT?
NYAA
I STILL HAVE HOPES THAT I'LL GET A GOLD BELL SOMEDAY
WHAT?

YOU'RE STILL DETERMINED, EVEN IN SPITE OF YOUR LOVE SITUATION?
DIDN'T YOU, YOU STUPID JERK!
YOU SAW MY POSTCARD AT THE STUDIO
I'M THE STUPID JERK? YOU'RE THE ONE SENDING A POSTCARD TO A GUY LIKE HIM!
WHAT KIND OF PERSON WOULD DO SUCH A CRUEL THING? YOU REALLY ARE UNBELIEVEABLE
YOU REALLY ARE A PIECE OF WORK!

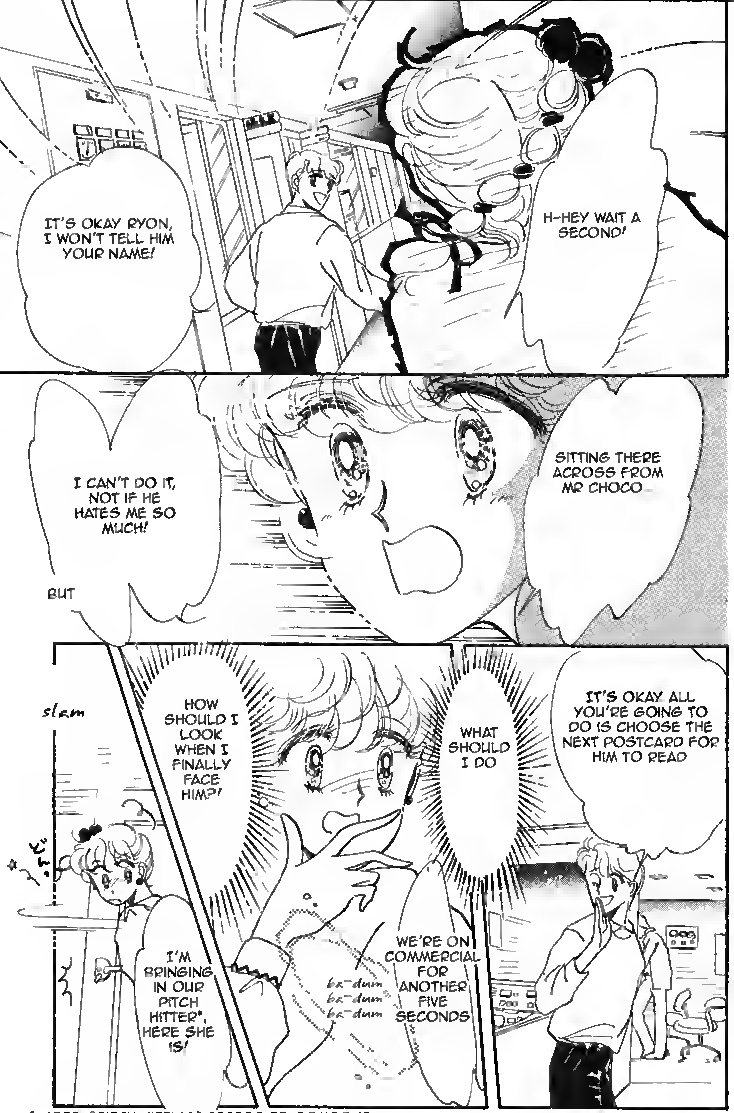
DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE OVER IDEALIZING HIM?
HE JUST READS FROM A SCRIPT. THERE'S NOTHING SINCERE ABOUT WHAT HE SAYS OR DOES.
A GUY LIKE THAT?! MR. CHOCO IS TOTALLY KIND, UNLIKE YOU! AT LEAST HE GIVES PEOPLE ADVICE INSTEAD OF JUST CRITICIZING. WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME SENDING HIM POSTCARDS?
YOU...YOU JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT
IT'S JUST THAT MR CHOCO ISN'T SUPPOSED TO
THEY SAY
THAT HE'S A MYSTERIOUS PERSON. DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S SO GIRLS AND FANS LIKE YOU CAN IMAGINE ANY FANTASY THEY WANT ABOUT HIM? THAT'S WHY MEETING HIM IN PERSON IS SUCH A PAIN
BIRKOTROY • CALIFORNIA

DO YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THAT EVEN AFTER WORKING YOUR BUTT OFF AT THE STATION, YOU STILL HAVE NEVER MET HIM? HE MUST NOT LIKE YOU VERY MUCH AT ALL.
plip
plip
plip
dash
ba-dum

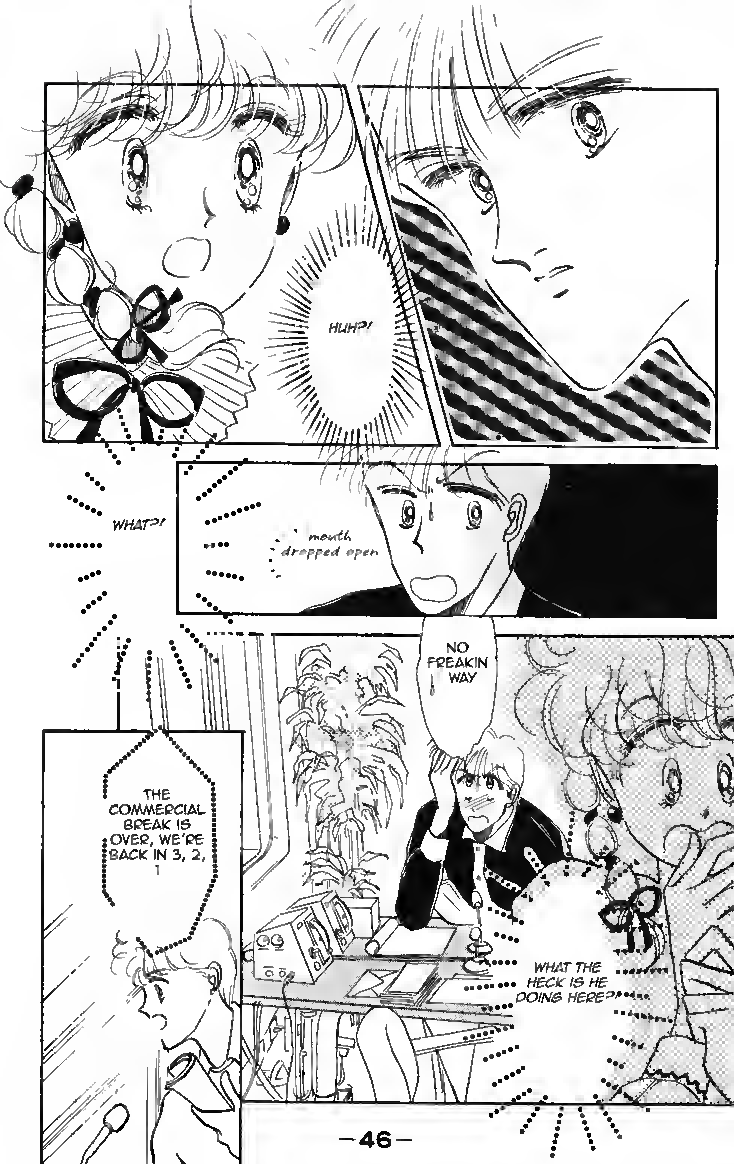

wipe
AH
NO THAT CAN'T BE, CAN'T IT? IT CAN'T BE
I "STILL" HAVEN'T MET MR CHOCO?
HUH?!
HEY! HOW COME, HOW COME, HOW COME
HUH, RYON? YOU'RE REALLY EARLY TODAY
H-HEY, WAIT A MINUTE RYON
IS HE REALLY SUCH A MAN OF MYSTERY THAT NO ONE CAN MEET WITH HIM?

WELL YEAH, OF COURSE
mrggh
THEN, I CAN MEET HIM TOO?!
THAT'S NOT TRUE, THERE ARE TONS OF FANS WHO HAVE MET HIM
UM, NOTHING
WHAT?
MR. CHOCO MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WAS TOTALLY AGAINST IT
BUT WHEN I HIRED YOU, RYON
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHY

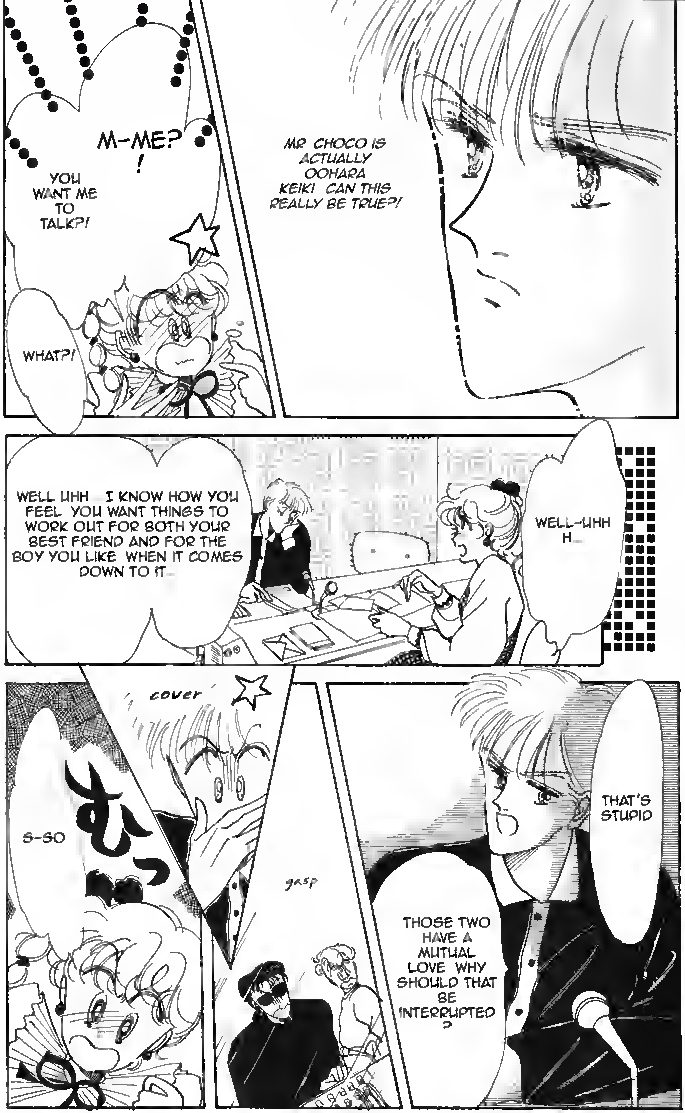
DOES MR CHOCO HATE ME?
BUT WHY?!
OH NO! WE'RE IN TROUBLE WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO TODAY?
HUH?
OUR WRITER IS SICK IN BED WITH A COLD AND CAN'T MAKE IT TODAY. BUT WE NEED SOMEONE TO SIT WITH MR. CHOCO AND GIVE HIM DIRECTIONS. SO I'M LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO FILL THE ROLE FOR TODAY.
.....


IT'S OKAY RYON, I WON'T TELL HIM YOUR NAME!
H-HEY WAIT A SECOND!
I CAN'T DO IT, NOT IF HE HATES ME SO MUCH!
SITTING THERE ACROSS FROM MR CHOCO—
BUT
slam
HOW SHOULD I LOOK WHEN I FINALLY FACE HIM?!
WHAT SHOULD I DO
IT'S OKAY ALL YOU'RE GOING TO DO IS CHOOSE THE NEXT POSTCARD FOR HIM TO READ
I'M BRINGING IN OUR PITCH HITTER*, HERE SHE IS!
WE'RE ON COMMERCIAL FOR ANOTHER FIVE SECONDS
ba-dum ba-dum ba-dum

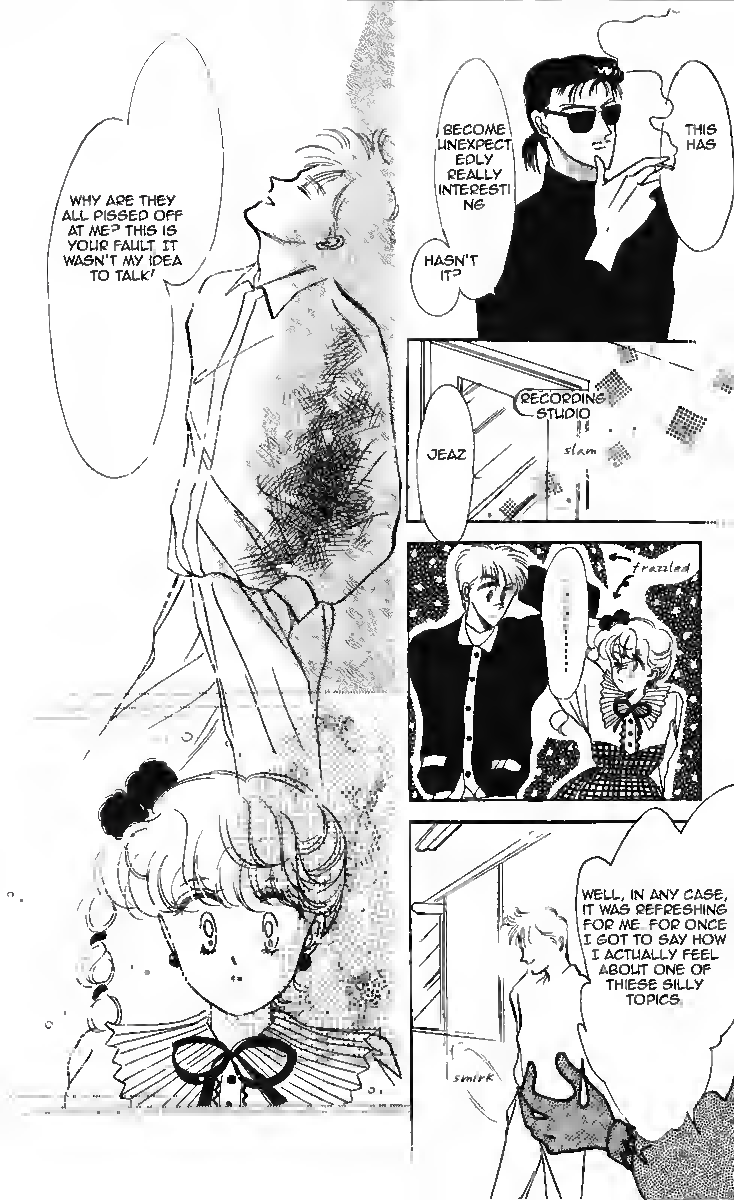
* NOTE: "PITCH HITTING" REFERS TO SOMEONE WHO IS CALLED IN TO DO TEMPORARY, EMERGENCY WORK IN A COMPANY, OUTSIDE OF THEIR NORMAL JOB RESPONSIBILITIES


HUH?!
WHAT?!
mouth dropped open
NO FREAKIN WAY
THE COMMERCIAL BREAK IS OVER, WE'RE BACK IN 3, 2, 1
WHAT THE HECK IS HE DOING HERE?

MR. CHOCO
THERE'S A BOY I'VE LIKED FOR A LONG TIME... WE'LL CALL HIM MR. T. AND HE FINALLY CONFESSED HIS FEELINGS FOR ME TOO. BUT THE PROBLEM IS, MY BEST FRIEND ALSO HAS A CRUSH ON HIM. SO WE CAN'T SEE EACH OTHER...
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS. MR. CHOCO IS RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES, TALKING RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME!
W-WHAT SHOULD I DO?!
.....
AND ON TOP OF THAT, ON TOP OF THAT...
HUH?!
WELL RYON, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS?


M-ME?!
YOU WANT ME TO TALK?!
WHAT?!
MR. CHOCO IS ACTUALLY OOHARA KEIKI CAN THIS REALLY BE TRUE?!
WELL UHH... I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL. YOU WANT THINGS TO WORK OUT FOR BOTH YOUR BEST FRIEND AND FOR THE BOY YOU LIKE. WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT...
WELL-UHH H...
cover
S-SO
gasp
THOSE TWO HAVE A MUTUAL LOVE. WHY SHOULD THAT BE INTERRUPTED?
THAT'S STUPID

THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M SAYING! SUPPOSE BOTH GIRLS DO GIVE UP ON THIS GUY WELL THEN, HOW DOES THAT LEAVE THE GUY AND HIS EMOTIONS? WHAT HAPPENS TO WHAT HE WANTS?
SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT SO LONG AS THINGS WORK OUT FOR YOU, WHO CARES ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO ANYONE ELSE'S FEELINGS?
slam
AND IF IT DOESN'T WORK OUT, THEN SHE SHOULD HURRY UP AND DUMP THE GUY SO SHE CAN AT LEAST SALVAGE HER FRIENDSHIP
IF THEIR LOVE BLOSSOMS, THEN THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH
WELL KEI- MR CHOCO EVEN IF THEIR LOVE DOES BLOSSOM, THEN YOU'LL BE TO BLAME FOR THE GIRLS'S FRIENDSHIP BREAKING UP
WELL...
YOU'RE SO SELF-CENTERED AND GREEDY
HEH HEH


WHY ARE THEY ALL PISSED OFF AT ME? THIS IS YOUR FAULT IT WASN'T MY IDEA TO TALK!
BECOME UNEXPECTEDLY REALLY INTERESTING
HASN'T IT?
THIS HAS
RECORDING STUDIO
slam
JEAZ
frazzled
.....
WELL, IN ANY CASE, IT WAS REFRESHING FOR ME. FOR ONCE I GOT TO SAY HOW I ACTUALLY FEEL ABOUT ONE OF THESE SILLY TOPICS.
smirk

AH HA HA
DON'T BE SCARED
WAHH!
COME ON YOU
smack
GET OUTTA HERE
sigh
RYON?
RYON - I WANT FRENCH FRIES -
YO!
yank
ouch!
yump
WHATEVER
ARE YOU REALLY THAT DRAINED? HAS WORK BEEN REALLY BUSY LATELY? EVERYONE WAS WORRIED SICK WHEN YOU WERE ABSENT THE OTHER DAY, THE RUMORS WERE FLYING
frazzled

rub rub
DID THAT LUMP ON YOUR HEAD FROM YESTERDAY GET ANY BETTER?
YEAH
HEY OOHARA
WHAT ARE YOU GIRLS DOING EATING OUTSIDE WHEN IT'S FREEZING OUT?
IT'S RARE TO SEE YOU HERE AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL
HEY, HEY! WHAT LUMP IS HE TALKING ABOUT? WHAT HAPPENED?!
HEY, WAIT, RYON!
dash
WAIT DID YOU FINALLY MEET MR CHOCO?!
.....

I WONDER HOW SHE'D FEEL ABOUT MR CHOCO BEING
IF I TOLD MAKIKO WHAT REALLY HAPPENED, I WONDER WHAT SHE'D SAY
SO HOW IS THAT RELATED TO GETTING A LUMP EXACTLY?
DID YOU FINALLY GET TO TALK TO HIM?! THAT'S AMAZING, WAY TO GO!
UM, YEAH I GUESS
THESE ARE ALL ADDRESSED TO ME?!
HER DARLING KEIKI THAT SHE LOVES SO MUCH
IT TURNS OUT THAT A NATURAL DIALOGUE WAS POPULAR AFTER ALL. PEOPLE LOVED HEARING ABOUT HOW KEIKO WAS BORED OF BEING MR CHOCO - THE REVELATION WAS A SHOCKER TO OUR AUDIENCE!
sweatdrop
I WAS SURE YOU'D DO A RE-RECORDING OF THE SEGMENT
YOU CALL THAT HORRIBLE SITUATION A HIT BROADCAST?!
YUP, LAST NIGHT'S BROADCAST WAS A HUGE HIT! WE GOT ONE HECK OF A REACTION OUT OF PEOPLE!

KEI... I MEAN, MR CHOCO, REALLY IS BORED WITH HIS JOB?
YEAH, BUT YOU SEE
HE HAS ONE SPECIAL FAN... AND I THINK ITS FOR HER SAKE THAT HE CONTINUES GOING ON THE AIR EVEN WHEN HE'S BORED BY IT
HEY JERK, WOULD YOU STOP YAPPING AND TELLING HER ABOUT THINGS SHE DOESN'T NEED TO KNOW?
WAHAH AHA
slam
HO HO HO, WHAT'S THIS? YOU OF ALL PEOPLE HAVE A SPECIAL SOMEONE?
WHY SHOULDN'T I?
IT'S TRUE, EVEN I HAVE SOMEONE SPECIAL THAT I CARE ABOUT DEEPLY

GOOD LUCK
OKAY RYON, YOU'RE ON AGAIN TODAY, SO RELAX
pat
HOW CAN YOU BE BORED WHEN YOU STAR IN
YOUR OWN SHOW ?
MR CHOCO'S SHOW
DID YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT THE PROGRAM WAS AN ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF MR CHOCO'S?
thud

OVER THERE THE AD SYSTEM DIRECTS MY COMMERCIAL BREAKS FOR ME
IS SCRIPTED. THE WRITER SITS IN FRONT OF HIM DURING THE PROGRAM AND MAKES SURE HE FOLLOWS ALL THE PROMPTS PRECISELY
I JUST READ WHAT I'M TOLD
I SEE
SO MR. CHOCO DOESN'T DO THE RADIO SHOW ON HIS OWN
HE DOESN'T MAKE IT ALONE
DID YOU THINK RADIO WAS ONE-ON-ONE COMMUNICATION? NOBODY CAN RUN A RADIO PROGRAM BY THEMSELF. IT'S A PROCESS THAT REQUIRES A LOT OF PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER

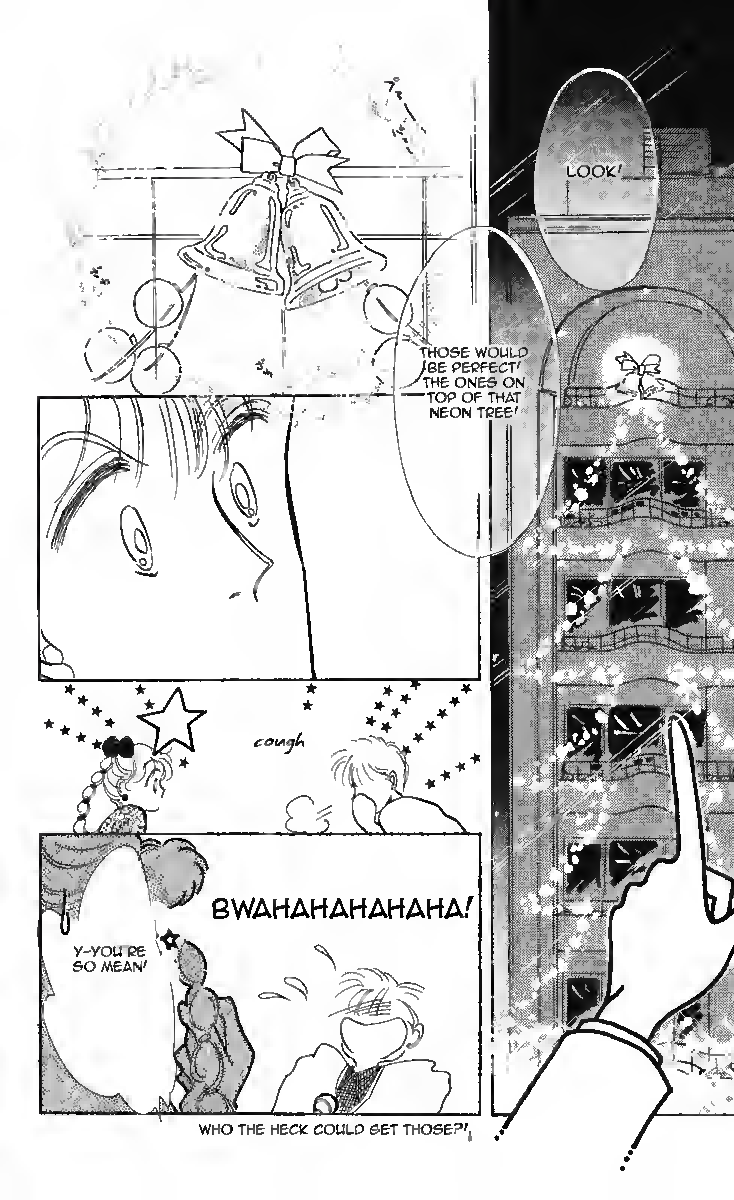
ba-dum
WHAT!
THIS NEXT COMMERCIAL IS THE LAST ONE FOR THIS SEGMENT
MY, AREN'T YOU GETTING HENPECKED?
giggle
CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
TO ME BEING HIRED HERE
I HEARD THAT YOU WERE STRONGLY OPPOSED

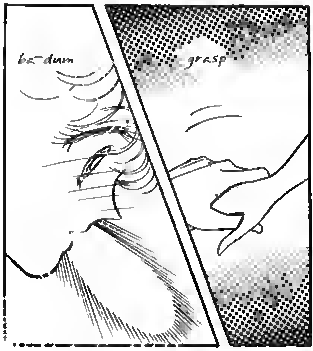
WHAT ELSE WOULD IT BE?
WHAT, THAT'S ALL?
WHAT A RELIEF
I'D BE
IN A PINCH IF PEOPLE FOUND OUT WHAT MY JOB WAS
MR. CHOCO DOESN'T HATE ME AFTER ALL
ACK
slap
HAVE YOU GOTTEN ANY POSTCARDS LATELY?
flip
HAVE THIS LITTLE ONE
I AM IN AN UNREQUITED LOVE IT'S SO PAINFUL
FROM RYON
I DO

WHO IS IN
A PAINFUL RELATIONSHIP
ABOUT A GIRL
ba-dum
OKAY, FIVE SECONDS LEFT!
I WONDER WHO IS TUNING IN OUT THERE
ONCE AGAIN, IT'S CHOCOLATE NIGHT
ba-dum
ba-dum
ba-dum

THAT I THINK KEIKI REALLY IS AMAZING
IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS
WHEN HE'S IN FRONT OF THE MIC
HIS FACE BECOMES MORE LIKE HOW I IMAGINE MR CHOCO'S TO BE
NOW, LET'S OPEN A POSTCARD
AH
AH, THE GOLD BELL TRADITION! I THOUGHT THAT WAS JUST FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL KIDS
OH I KNOW ABOUT IT, WOMEN EVERYWHERE MAKE A BIG FUSS ABOUT IT
SO YOU MEAN, ON CHRISTMAS EVE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO WEAR THIS GOLD BELL OVER YOUR CHEST, AND CONFESS YOUR TRUE FEELINGS TO THE PERSON YOU LOVE? AND THE RENDEVOUS SPOT FOR THIS IS UNDERNEATH THE TREE ACROSS FROM OUR STUDIO?
LOOK, LOOK! A GOLD BELL!

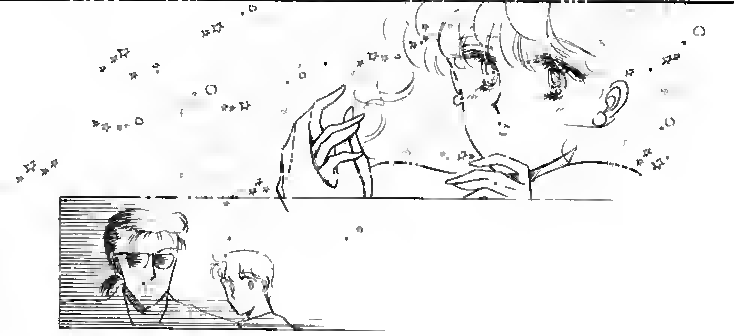
I WAS THINKING
UNTIL LAST CHRISTMAS, I ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS DOING ENOUGH TO BE SATISFIED ABOUT IT BUT THIS YEAR,
I'VE BEEN GIVING ADVICE TO SOME COUPLES AT MY SCHOOL, TOO
HEY MR CHOCO
I THINK
WANT A GOLD BELL TOO
THIS YEAR I KIND OF
YOU MEAN LIKE THAT TABLE BELL WE SAW WINDOW SHOPPING THAT ONE TIME?
HMM, MAYBE SOMEHTING BIGGER, THAT'D BE MORE SPECIAL
YEAH


LOOK!
THOSE WOULD BE PERFECT! THE ONES ON TOP OF THAT NEON TREE!
cough
BWAHAHAHAHAHA!
Y-YOU'RE SO MEAN!
WHO THE HECK COULD GET THOSE?!


be-dum
grasp

OH, NO, NO, I TAKE IT BACK, I'M SORRY I GUESS YOU'RE NOT THE ORDINARY PERSON I THOUGHT YOU WERE, RYON!
I KNEW IT! I JUST KNEW YOU'D LAUGH AT ME! I AM LEAVING!!

IT WOULD UPSET ME IF YOU LEFT



TAKING SOMEONE OFF THE AIR
I'M SURE IT'LL BE OKAY
AND I DON'T THINK YOUR TEACHERS ARE TUNING IN TO THE BROADCAST
YEAH... FROM THE BEGINNING, I WASN'T SURE THIS WOULD TURN OUT OKAY BUT EVER SINCE WE TOOK THE BROADCAST IN THIS DIRECTION, WE'VE RECEIVED TONS OF LETTERS FROM RYON'S FRIENDS
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
FOR A LITTLE WHILE, RYON
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN TAKE HIM OFF THE AIR, BUT I THINK IT'S BEST IF YOU TAKE A BREAK
OKAY?
BUT IF ANYONE FINDS OUT WHO YOU ARE, WE COULD BE IN TROUBLE

chatter chatter
WELL, IT'S A LITTLE EARLIER THAN EXPECTED, SO LET'S PLAY A SONG FROM THE CHRISTMAS AID ALBUM
YEAH, BUT WHEN HE WAS ON THE AIR WITH RYON HE WAS DOING GREAT!
KEIKI DOESN'T SEEM INTO WHAT HE'S DOING ANYMORE
EVERYTHING WAS SUPPOSED TO BE AWESOME, IF ONLY I COULD SEE MR CHOCO
AND NOW I HAVE WHAT I WANTED, BUT I'M STILL SO UNSATISFIED

WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO? (HE LOOKS LIKE A PIRATE)
OH, THANK YOU
IN FRONT OF MR CHOCO?
I WANT TO BE IN FRONT OF MR CHOCO AGAIN
SITTING NEXT TO HIM
thwop
AH, THESE ARE KEIKI'S INSTRUCTIONS
ANYWAY, READ A POSTCARD
SHUT UP!
giggle giggle
HEY, KEIKI! WHAT KIND OF A CRAPPY DJ ARE YOU ANYWAY?!
JEAZ. I'M WEARING HEADPHONES. YOU'RE GOING TO EXPLODE MY EARDRUMS WITH THAT BARKING!
HMMM
LET'S SEE, A QUESTION FOR MR. CHOCO! WHY IS THE PROGRAM CALLED "CHOCOLATE NIGHT"? PLEASE EXPLAIN!
WELL, THERE'S A MINT CHOCOLATE CALLED "AFTER EIGHT"

YUP
AND WE BROADCAST AFTER 8 PM, RIGHT? I REALLY LIKE THAT KIND OF CHOCOLATE, SO I THOUGHT MAYBE I WOULD NAME MYSELF AFTER THE SWEET I LIKE SO MUCH, THE TRUTH IS, I HAVE A HUGE SWEET TOOTH
OH, IS THAT SO?
DO YOU LOVE SWEET THINGS?
OH YES, I LOVE SWEET THINGS, LIKE CHOCOLATE, AND CAKE
I ALSO LOVE CAKE*
*NOTE CAKE AND KEIKI'S NAME ARE PRONOUNCED THE SAME WAY IN JAPANESE

plip
plip
plip
flutter
RYON!
MAKIKO? NO WAY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I WAS ON MY WAY HOME FROM CRAM SCHOOL AND I THOUGHT I'D STOP BY AND SEE YOU. LOOKS LIKE I HAD GOOD TIMING!

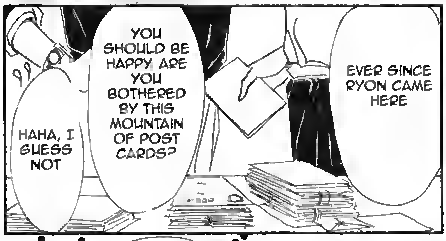
HEY
WHAT'S WRONG?
RYON?
SO IT WASN'T MY IMAGINATION THAT YOU WEREN'T FEELING LIKE YOURSELF, RYON
RYON
ARE YOU HIDING SOMETHING FROM ME?
DOES IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE HOLIDAYS?

KEIKI HAS SOMEONE SPECIAL TO HIM
I KNOW THAT ALREADY
BUT WHAT'S THE POINT? THIS ISN'T LIKE YOU RYON YOU NEVER DEAL WITH THIS KIND OF STUFF, YOU'RE GUARDED AGAINST IT AREN'T YOU?
BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HER NAME IS EVERYONE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT HIS UNREQUITED LOVE

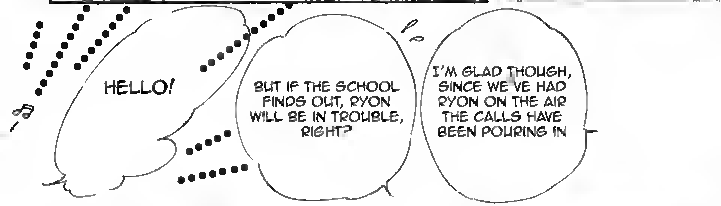
K-KEIKI IS MR. CHOCO?!
NO WAY
HAHA
ARE WE SUDDENLY LOVE FOOLS?
SO THAT MEANS YOU AND I ARE RIVALS NOW, HUH RYON?
THIS COAT REMINDS ME OF CHRISTMAS IN LONDON
ARE YOU SAYING YOU WERE SO WORRIED ABOUT MY FEELINGS THAT YOU DIDN'T TAKE ANY ACTION?
RYON

DON'T YOU
LIKE KEIKI?
EVEN WHEN HE'S NOT MR. CHOCO
OKAY THEN!
RYON, I'M ABANDONING THIS LOVE FOR YOU
THIS IS YOUR FIRST LOVE, RIGHT RYON?
YOU TWO MAKE A GREAT COUPLE

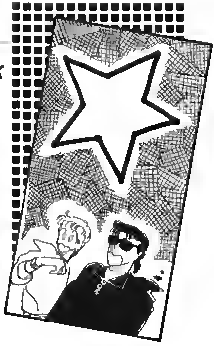
STUDIO
PANORAMA


YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY ARE YOU BOTHERED BY THIS MOUNTAIN OF POST CARDS?
EVER SINCE RYON CAME HERE
HAHA, I GUESS NOT

third


HELLO!
BUT IF THE SCHOOL FINDS OUT, RYON WILL BE IN TROUBLE, RIGHT?
I'M GLAD THOUGH, SINCE WE'VE HAD RYON ON THE AIR THE CALLS HAVE BEEN POURING IN

YEP!
BUT BEFORE I GO
WHAT, YOU'RE QUITTING YOUR JOB?!



WOULD YOU LET ME DO THE SHOW WITH MR CHOCO ONE LAST TIME?
I'M OUT
WE'LL REACH SOME KIND OF BREAK THROUGH OR CONCLUSION
I KNOW IT'S BAD OF ME TO ASK, BUT I GET THE FEELING THAT IF I GET ONE MORE TIME TO DO IT
BUT I WANT TO SIT ACROSS FROM KEIKI THIS TIME
OF THE FISHBOWL
NOT MR CHOCO
BUT SOMEHOW I JUST WANNA GO BACK IN ONE MORE TIME

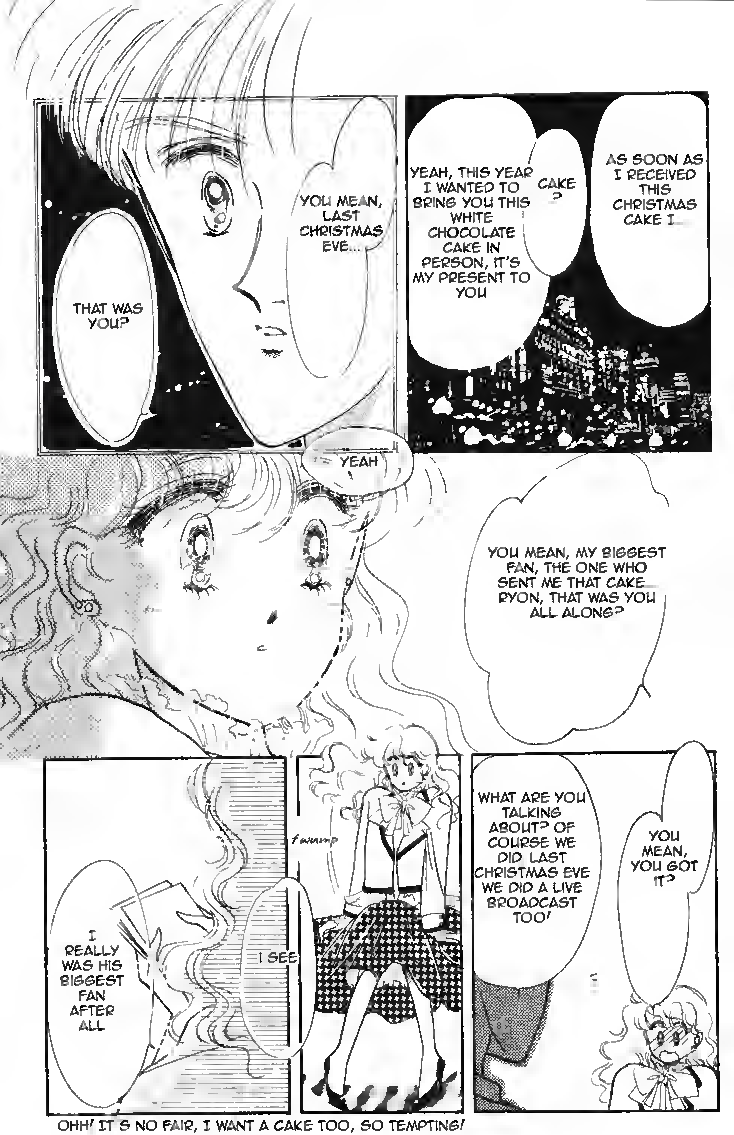
RYON'S HERE
UM... HEY, KEIKI!
PLEASE
WHEN WE DID OUR FIRST BROADCAST, OUR WRITER WASN'T HERE. KEIKI DID IT ALL BY HIMSELF
BUT BACK THEN, HE KEPT LOOKING AT US FOR GUIDANCE, HIS EYES WERE SO HELPLESS LOOKING
I THOUGHT WE'D ALWAYS HAVE TO PREPARE THE WHOLE PROGRAM FOR HIM TO PERFORM. BUT BEFORE WE KNEW IT
KEIKI STARTED WANTING TO DO THE PROGRAM ALL ON HIS OWN
HE EVEN FOUND HIMSELF A GOOD PARTNER

HE'S A STUBBORN AND LONESOME KIND OF GUY
IF YOU QUIT, HE'LL BE REALLY LONELY WITHOUT YOU
YEAH STAY!
PLEASE STAY!
THE ORDINARY GIRL WHO IS KEIKI'S PARTNER?
OR AM I JUST AN ORDINARY GIRL?
I WANT TO FIND OUT
I'M MR CHOCO'S
PARTNER?
WHAT?
EDDIE
Aug. 30, 1931

ARE YOU GONNA QUIT?
LOOK, LOOK, THESE CARDS WERE ALL SENT TO ME!
WERE YOU REALLY TIMID?
HMPH
DON'T BE STUPID
YOU MAD?
BUT I'M STAYING
I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO
WHY YOU !
HEY, KNOCK IT OFF!

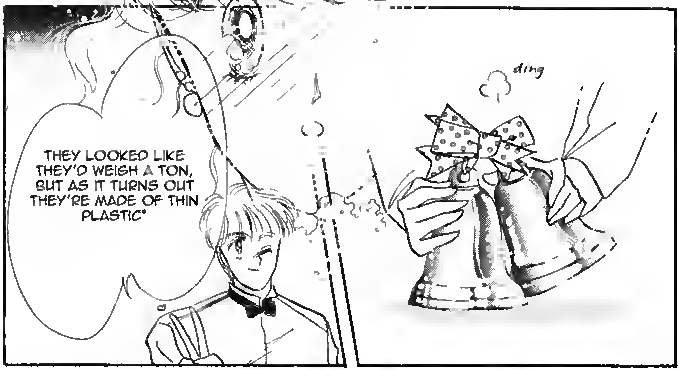
HEY, DID YOU KNOW?
NO WAY
CHOCOLATE NIGHT IS HAVING A LIVE BROADCAST ON ITS ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY CHRISTMAS EVE
THAT'S AWESOME!
THAT'S SO ROMANTIC

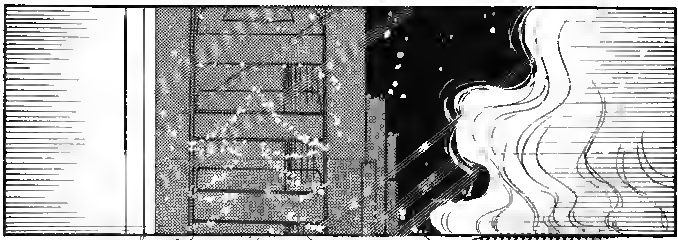
I HOPE
IT SNOWS
THAT'D BE NICE
RYON, HURRY, HURRY!
rush
rush
WHERE THE HECK HAVE YOU BEEN?! YOU'RE LATE!
S-SORRY ABOUT THAT!


YOU MEAN, LAST CHRISTMAS EVE...
THAT WAS YOU?
AS SOON AS I RECEIVED THIS CHRISTMAS CAKE I...
CAKE ?
YEAH, THIS YEAR I WANTED TO BRING YOU THIS WHITE CHOCOLATE CAKE IN PERSON, IT'S MY PRESENT TO YOU
YEAH
YOU MEAN, MY BIGGEST FAN, THE ONE WHO SENT ME THAT CAKE RYON, THAT WAS YOU ALL ALONG?
YOU MEAN, YOU GOT IT?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? OF COURSE WE DID LAST CHRISTMAS EVE WE DID A LIVE BROADCAST TOO!
twump
I SEE
I REALLY WAS HIS BIGGEST FAN AFTER ALL

OHH! IT'S NO FAIR, I WANT A CAKE TOO, SO TEMPTING!

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED DEC 1987 – JAN 1988 IN NAKAYOSHI

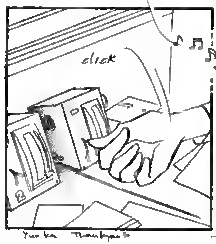


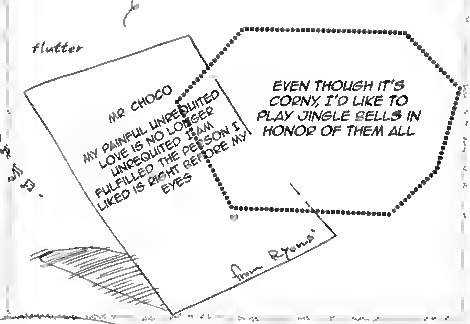


"NOTE, HE SAYS THE WORD "STYROL", A LESS COMMON WORD FOR THE SAME THING

Special Thanks to Mr Matsushima and Mr Sasaki

BUT THIS YEAR IS SPECIAL
BECAUSE NOW I HAVE SOMEONE TO SPEND CHRISTMAS EVE WITH
SOMEHOW, THAT JUST DOESN'T LOOK AS SATISFYING
HEY LOOK! THE BELL TOPPERS ARE MISSING!
WOW, THEY REALLY ARE!
THIS YEAR, AS USUAL THERE ARE MANY GIRLS WAITING UNDER THE TREE OUTSIDE, WEARING GOLD BELLS ON THEIR CHEST
I WANT YOU TO READ THIS POSTCARD NEXT
MR CHOCO




flutter
MR CHOCO
MY PAINFULL UNREQUITED LOVE IS NO LONGER UNREQUITED. I AM FULFILLED THE PERSON I LIKED IS RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES
EVEN THOUGH IT'S CORNY I'D LIKE TO PLAY JINGLE BELLS IN HONOR OF THEM ALL
from Ryouji

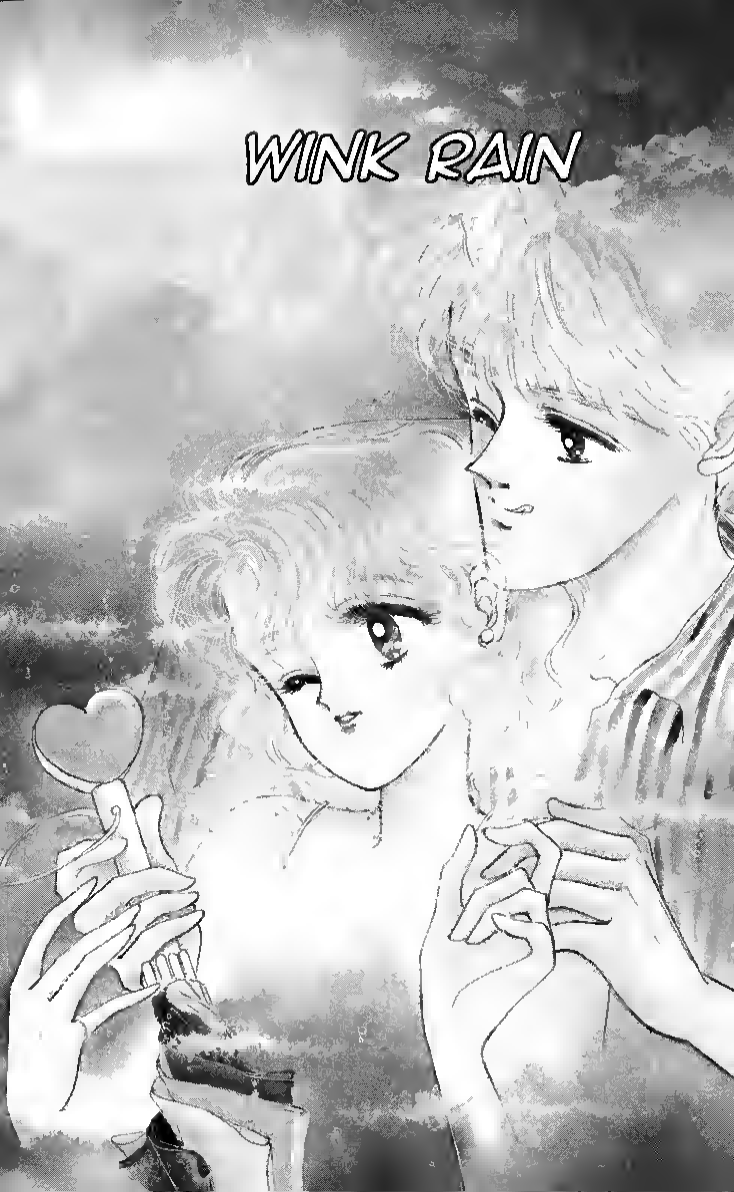
—and May be a

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy New Year!

★★ THE END ★★

—from Naoko
1987 & 1988 December
with my heart❤


WINK RAIN

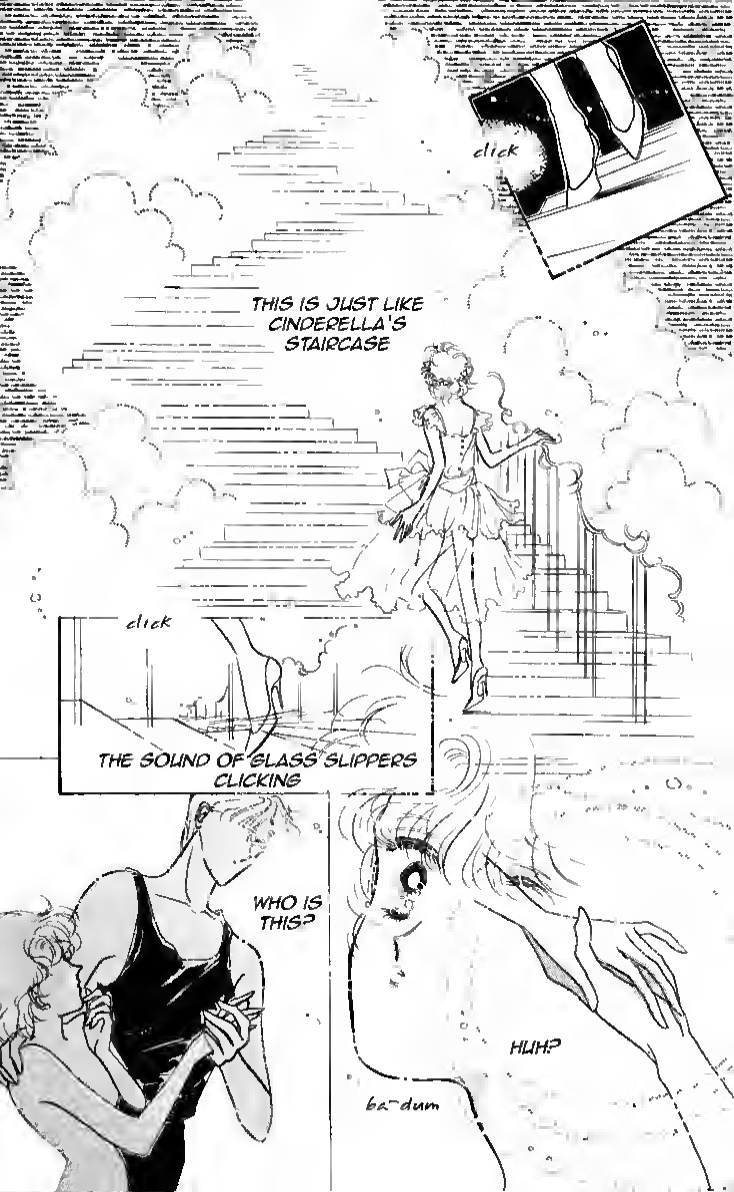
I LOVE:

DREAM-LIKE SUMMER AFTERNOONS

A STOLEN KISS, LIKE THE BLINK OF AN EYE

THE RAINY OCEANSIDE

AND THEN, THERE'S YOU...


click
THIS IS JUST LIKE CINDERELLA'S STAIRCASE
click
THE SOUND OF GLASS SLIPPERS CLICKING
WHO IS THIS?
HUH?
ba-dum

brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrng
plip
9
8
AH
stretch
IT'S RAINING OUTSIDE
YAWN
OH NO, WAS I CRYING, DREAMING AGAIN?
I HOPE
SOMETHING GOOD HAPPENS TODAY

LET'S GO HOME TO-GETHER TODAY!
YO, MARIN!
GOOD MORN-ING
MOR NIN'
3-1
yawn
chatter
chatter
ITOUKI!
OKAY! TODAY YOU'VE GOTTA HELP ME STUDY ENGLISH, OKAY?
FOR CRAM SCHOOL. CAN YOU TRANSLATE THIS FOR ME?
FOR CRAM SCHOOL OR FOR REGU-LAR CLASS?
AYA IS COMING ?!
OKAY, TODAY AIKAWA WILL BE COMING TOO, SO DON'T GO HOME WITHOUT US!

WE THREE HAVEN'T WALKED HOME TOGETHER SINCE WE GRADUATED MIDDLE SCHOOL, RIGHT?!
WOW
ITOU, THE EXAM SCORES HAVE COME OUT!
AND ONCE AGAIN, YOU'RE RANKED WITH THE HIGHEST GRADE!
I'VE GOTTA RUN, BUT WAIT FOR US AFTER SCHOOL MARIN!
OKAY!
fwoosh
YOO HOO! AYA!
MARIN, HAJI!!
YOU'RE LATE!

RIGHT? IT'S STILL LIKE THAT, YOU GUYS GET TO SEE EACH OTHER NOW AT CRAM SCHOOL LESSONS
"THE THREE MUSKE-TEERS"*
YEAH, BUT THE THREE OF US WALKING HOME TOGETHER LIKE THIS, IT'S JUST LIKE WE'RE BACK IN MIDDLE SCHOOL TO-GETHER AGAIN
MAN, IT MUST BE NICE GOING TO A CO-ED HIGH SCHOOL, IT'S SO BORING AT THE GIRL'S ACADEMY I'M AT. I MISS MIDDLE SCHOOL
HMPH
ITOUKI, YOU'RE A GOOF
*NOTE: LITERALLY MEANS "THE THREE FRIENDS" BUT I'VE STYLIZED THE LINE SINCE IT WORKS BETTER IN CONTEXT
HUH? WHO ME?
UMINO, LET'S NOT BE A THIRD WHEEL
BYE, ITOUKI!!
HEY, CAN WE STOP GOING ALONG WITH THIS "ITOUKI" THING NOW?
FROM NOW ON I'M ADDRESS-ING YOU AS YOUR NAME IS WRITTEN, ITOU HAJIME
MARIN, WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I KNEW IT, I REALLY AM THE THIRD WHEEL HERE!

MARIN, ARE YOU FREE AFTER AUGUST?
ANYWAY
MARIN, WILL YOU COME WITH US?
IT'LL BE OUR SECRET GET-AWAY
HAJI AND I WERE THINK-ING OF GOING TO THE BEACH, AND WE COULD STAY AT MY COUSIN'S PLACE,
BE-CAU SE
HMM
THE THREE OF US HAVE NEVER GONE ON A TRIP TO-GETHER
YEAH, LET'S GO
BUT
BUT
IT'S BEEN TOO LONG - DEFINITELY!

THE THREE MUSKETEERS
THAT WAS BACK IN MIDDLE SCHOOL
HAVE YOU ALREADY STRAIGHTENED YOUR SCHEDULE OUT?
SOMEDAY THOSE TWO WILL...
SORRY, I'VE GOTTA BACK OUT ON YOU
ACTUALLY, UMM, I DON'T THINK I CAN MAKE IT
I DION'T MEAN FOR YOU TO DO THAT, IT'S JUST THAT I..
I DON'T WANT TO COME BETWEEN THEM, BE A THIRD WHEEL
WHAT? OH, I GUESS IN THAT CASE I'LL SKIP OUT ON MY SUMMER TRAINING SO WE CAN HANG OUT
HOW TO SWIM! (NO, SERIOUSLY)
I JUST NEVER LEARNED

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!
YOU TWO SHOULD STILL GO!
WHAT, SHE REALLY CAN'T SWIM?
MARIN, YOU ALWAYS WORRY ABOUT US MORE THAN ANYTHING!
WHAT THE HELL?
YOU GUYS ARE UNBELIEVEABLE HANG ON A MINUTE!
IF I CAN TEACH HER TO SWIM, SHE'LL BE A BIG HELP TO US IN OUR COMPETITIONS!
ARE YOU ALLOWED TO OPENLY RECRUIT PEOPLE TO YOUR CLUB LIKE THAT?
MARIN, YOU SHOULD JOIN THE SWIMMING CLUB, I'LL TEACH YOU!
Yuan-Ajie Saturday
PLUS I WANNA GRAB LUNCH
UGH, IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO RAIN SOON, THERE'S SO MANY DARK CLOUDS AND I FORGOT MY UMBRELLA PLUS I FORGOT MY HOMEWORK FOR CRAM SCHOOL... I'M GONNA GO HOME SEE YA LATER!

swing
ITOUKI! YOU GOT HERE LATE TOO?
whoosh
SEE YA LATER AT CRAM SCHOOL!
ITOUKI, THAT DOESN'T COUNT!
YEESH, YOU'RE SOAKING WET! DON'T YOU HAVE AN UMBRELLA EITHER?
I FORGOT ABOUT IT
pour
vroom
rustle rustle
JEEZ, YOU'RE SUCH A FORGETFUL DORK
CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH
plip
splash
UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMS REGISTRATION OPENS SECOND SEMESTER

JEEZ, THIS THING IS SLOW
ITOUKI
HUH?
ARE YOU AND AYA A COUPLE?
HAHA, WELL
I GUESS SO
SO I GUESS THAT MEANS THAT I CAN'T HANG OUT WITH YOU THE SAME WAY ANYMORE, HUH
YOU'RE SILLY
DON'T ACT LIKE THAT
OR ME AND AKAWA WILL HAVE TO SMACK YOU UP

I HATE
ELEVA-
TORS
ESPE-
CIALLY
WHEN
I'M
ALONE
IN ONE
WITH
ITOUKI
ba-dum
HEY!
HURRY
UP!
HUH
?!
1
2
3
ding
gasp
shut
MY HEART BEAT
ba-dum
ba-dum
ba-dum
IS STRONG
ENOUGH TO CRUSH
ME
ding

fwoosh
YO YO!
ITOU, YOU'RE LATE!
FOOLS!
THE TEACHER IS ALREADY IN CLASS!
whoosh
I SHOULD HAVE

HMMPH, I WONDER IF ANYTHING GOOD REALLY WILL HAPPEN TODAY
AH HH
YEAH, PROB ABLY
I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO A DIFFERENT HIGH SCHOOL
OKAY, THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY!
TODAY IS THE LAST DAY TO REGISTER FOR THE MOCK ENTRY EXAMS
MARIN, WANNA GO OUT FOR TEA?
OH, SHOOT! SORRY, I'VE GOTTA GO REGIS-TER!
BUT DIDN'T SHE REG-ISTER FOR THE TEST LAST SES-SION?
THAT'S WHAT I THOUG HT
?
I THINK
I'M THE LAST ONE TO LEAVE NOW
pour

ding
twish
YOU'RE NOT GONNA TAKE THE ELEVATOR?
HUH, ME?
I'M GOING TO TAKE THE STAIRS
BUT IT'S RAINING OUTSIDE
YEAH, THAT'S OK
EXIT
pour

WHY AM I FEELING THIS WAY?
click
clack
I KNOW I'M BEING FOOLISH, BUT
slide
slip
trip
ACK!
EEEK!
yikes
thud
KYAA AA!!
bump bump
OOO OOW WW-W-WCH

I REALLY
A FOOL
AM
SO COLD
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHA?
ba-dum
HUH?
pour

SO CRAZY
IT FEELS
YOUR PULSE
IS BEATING SO FAST
grin
shiver
WOULD YOU LIKE MY JACKET?
gasp
I THOUGHT IT WOULD STOP RAINING SOON, BUT SO FAR NO SIGNS OF IT LETTING UP
UGHH, THIS IS SO EMBARASSING I COULD DIE!

slip
thud
AH! UM, I'LL BE OKAY ON MY OWN, BUT THANKS!
HE DOESN'T HAVE AN UMBRELLA WITH HIM
YOU SHOULD HURRY HOME BEFORE IT GETS ANY WORSE, HERE, HAVE AN UMBRELLA
beeep
HUH?
WHAT SHOULD I DO
peer
WHAT SHOULD I DO
!?
ARE YOU OKAY?
grab
OH COOL, NOW WE HAVE TWO UMBRELLAS
LUCKY!
HUH?

UM, HANG ON A MINUTE
WHAT?!
IS IT OK IF I BORROW THIS? I'LL BRING IT BACK DURING OUR NEXT CRAM SCHOOL SESSION
YOU SAVED ME! I FORGOT MY UMBRELLA AT HOME
YOU'RE MARIN!
RIGHT?
THAT'S WHEN
I FIRST FELT
THAT SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT
THAN MY UMBRELLA HAD BEEN TAKEN
FROM ME

I THINK I'VE SEEN HIM SOMEWHERE BEFORE
swing
THAT WEIRD GUY
OH NO, I'M LATE AGAIN! I WISH I COULD SKIP
DID YOU COME HERE STRAIGHT FROM SCHOOL?
THE ELEVATOR IS COMING DOWN
WHY IS HE SMILING AT ME LIKE THAT?
smile
HOW DID YOU KNOW MY NAME?
YOUR NAME?
YEAH, MARIN IS MY NICK NAME
THAT'S NOT YOUR REAL NAME?
NO, IT'S NOT
HEY, HOLD THE DOOR FOR ME!
pant pant
ITOUKI
I GO TO HER REGULAR SCHOOL
swing
REALLY? I WOULDN'T HAVE GUESSED THAT
HUH ARE YOU A FRESHMAN IN HIGH SCHOOL LIKE US?

THE BROWN-EYED MISS UMINO MARINA
YOU ALWAYS MAKE THE SAME FACE, EVEN IN CRAM SCHOOL
I DIDN'T KNOW (THEN AGAIN, I HAVE NO INTEREST IN BOYS)
HAHA, OH, YOU DIDN'T KNOW KOIZUMI? FROM OUR BOYS'S CLASS?
.....☆
THAT JERK, HE ALREADY KNEW MY REAL NAME!
DAMN! YOU CAN NEVER UNDERSTAND WHAT MR. MORIZAKI IS TEACHING IN MATH UNLESS YOU TAKE NOTES!
ACK! CLASS STARTED TWENTY MINUTES AGO!
WHAT THE-
whoosh
BEGIN
OKAY! READY, SET
ding

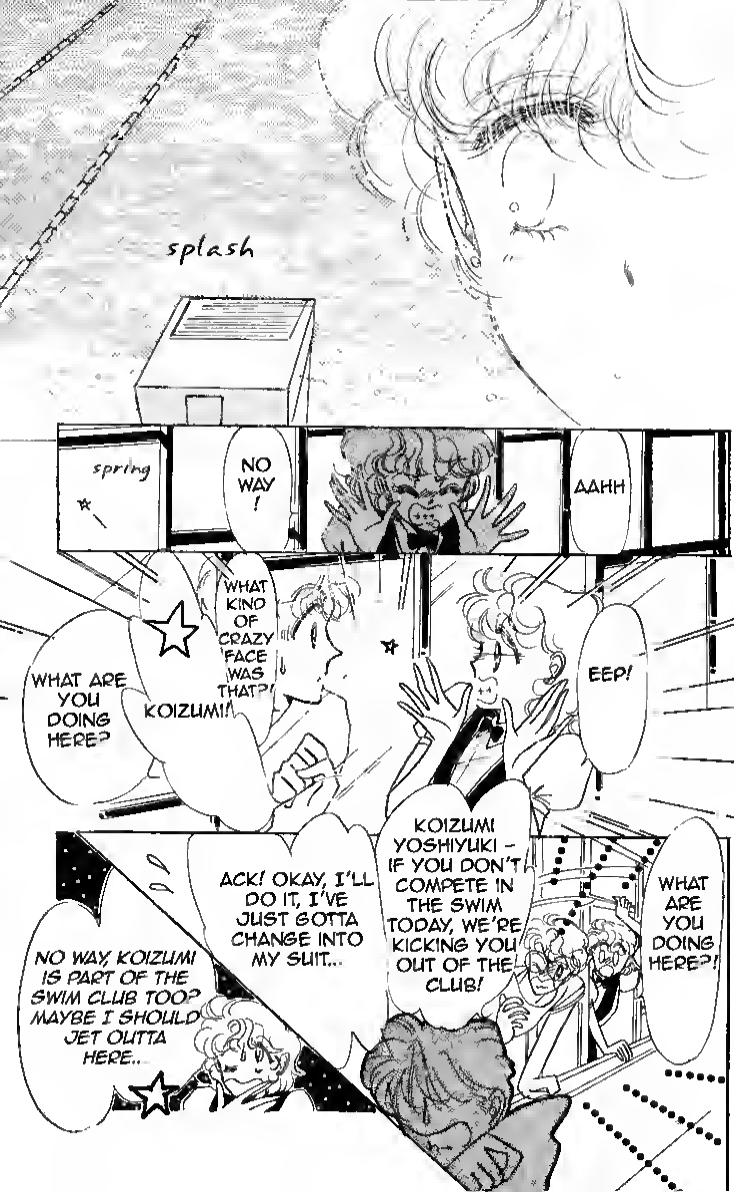
giggle
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU COULD GET THROUGH THE DOOR WITHOUT BEING NOTICED!
MARIN, YOU'RE LATE!
THEY GOT THERE LATE AND ARE SITTING IN THE FRONT ROW?! WHAT THE HELL?!
plop
I'M STUCK IN THE BACK
BANG
DAMN
I'LL JUST SNEAK IN
THOSE GUYS ARE INCREDIBLE. EVEN THOUGH THEY CAME IN LATE, THEY UNDERSTAND THE LECTURE
HAJI IS SO SMART
THEY'RE THE SORT THAT UNDERSTAND THINGS EVEN BEFORE THEY HEAR THEM I GUESS
THOSE GUYS
REALLY ARE SERIOUS PEOPLE
NO MATTER
HOW THEY ACT
I KEEP TRYING TO REMEMBER WHERE I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE

peace
YOU THINK SO? I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
HUH?
LOOKS LIKE ITOUKI
KOI-ZUMI
stare
MARIN
snap!
blush
stare
stare
smack
IDIOT
OW!
I TAKE IT ALL BACK
DORKS
ARE YOU FRIENDS WITH THEM?
HAJI AND KOIZUMI ARE REALLY CLOSE BUDS, DIDN'T YOU KNOW THAT? (I KNOW THEM WELL)

IDIOT, YOU GOT THAT ONE WRONG!
OH, REALLY?
THEY'VE ALWAYS GONE TO CRAM SCHOOL TOGETHER, EVEN WHEN THEY WENT TO DIFFERENT MIDDLE SCHOOLS
THEY'RE JUST LIKE
A COUPLE OF KIDS
giggle
COME ON, LET'S GO HOME
MY UMBRELLA
twish

BUT ANYWAY, MARIN, WHY DID YOU HAVE TWO UMBRELLAS PACKED IN YOUR BAG?
OR DID YOU PACK IT FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO USE?
WAS IT BY ACCIDENT?
I THOUGHT AS MUCH
OH UHH... I FORGOT IT
IDIOT
AH HA HA
YOU AREN'T SUPPOSED TO HOLD AN UMBRELLA WHILE RIDING A BIKE
ba-dum
UM, JUST A MISTAKE
gasp
MARIN'S ALWAYS CARRIED TWO UMBRELLAS WITH HER, EVER SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL. MAYBE IT'S JUST AN ECCENTRICITY?
AH HA HA

ITOUKI USED TO BORROW YOUR SPARE UMBRELLA SOMETIMES, RIGHT?
WHY DO I HAVE TO THINK ABOUT WAY BACK THEN AT A TIME LIKE NOW?
rub
ding
splash
GOOD!
YOU CAME AFTER ALL!
AH HA HA
WAAH!
I STILL HAVEN'T AGREED TO GO IN THE WATER
COME ON!
YOU'LL MAKE AYA HAPPY IF YOU COME TO THE BEACH WITH US!
pour


splash
spring
NO WAY!
AAHH
WHAT KIND OF CRAZY FACE WAS THAT?!
KOIZUMI!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
EEP!
KOIZUMI YOSHIYUKI - IF YOU DON'T COMPETE IN THE SWIM TODAY, WE'RE KICKING YOU OUT OF THE CLUB!
ACK! OKAY, I'LL DO IT, I'VE JUST GOTTA CHANGE INTO MY SUIT...
NO WAY, KOIZUMI IS PART OF THE SWIM CLUB TOO? MAYBE I SHOULD JET OUTTA HERE...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

I DIDN'T COME TO JOIN YOUR CLUB, I CAME BECAUSE ITOUKI SAID HE WAS GOING TO TEACH ME TO SWIM!
ITOU SAID THAT?! SERIOUSLY?!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO JOIN THE CLUB TO LEARN HOW TO SWIM!
WHY ARE YOU LEAVING?
SHE'S THE ONE WHO CAN'T SWIM, YOU JERK! I CAN SWIM!
THIS WAS A LOUSY IDEA
ACK!
KOIZUMI!
HE MIGHT BE A SUPER GENIUS, BUT HE ONLY JUST LEARNED HOW TO SWIM HIMSELF!
wriggle
BUT YOU KNOW
HEY, YOU MEAN THAT GIRL WITH THE LONG HAIR, YOUR FRIEND, WANTS TO LEARN HOW TO SWIM TOO?
IF UMINO JOINED THE CLUB TOO, WE'D BE A TRIO AGAIN, JUST LIKE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL AND AT CRAM SCHOOL LESSONS

AYA ?
OH, BUT SHE GOES TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL
OH, IS THAT RIGHT? MY MISTAKE, I THOUGHT SHE WENT HERE SINCE SHE'S DATING ITOU
I PROBABLY SHOULD
JUST GIVE UP
I GET THE FEELING THAT I'LL BE LEFT BEHIND AS THEIR FRIEND SINCE HE AND AYA
ARE CLOSER
SO ARE YOU
GOING TO BE GOING TO THE BEACH WITH THOSE TWO?
ACK ..WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS?
GOING TO THE BEACH ?
YEAH, ITOUKI AND AYA INVITED ME

STAB
SO IT'S JUST THE THREE OF YOU? I GUESS YOU'LL BE THE THIRD WHEEL IN THAT TRIP
WHAT?!
IF I TAG ALONG, THEN YOU WON'T BE A THIRD WHEEL WITH THOSE TWO. BESIDES, I LOVE THE OCEAN
ba-dum
I'LL GO TOO!
SOUND GOOD?

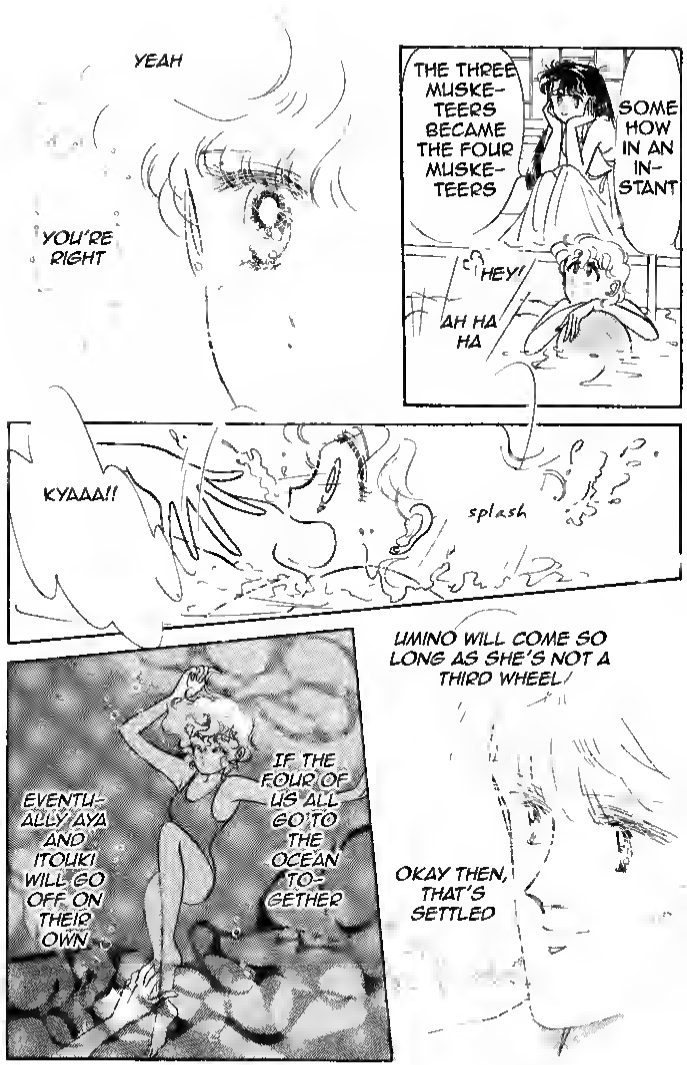
HE'S A WEIRD ONE
HUH?
INSPIRATION
SINGS OUT PEEP PEEP PEEP
THIS YEAR'S
SUMMER VACATION
WILL DEFINITELY BE DIFFERENT
RIGHT?
THAT WOULD BE WONDERFUL

HURRY, HURRY UP AYA!
ACK! HEY, WAIT UP MARIN!
I DIDN'T JOIN BY CHOICE
I WAS FORCED TO JOIN THE CLUB
MARIN, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU REALLY JOINED THE SWIM CLUB. I'M IN AWE OF YOU COMING OUT TO TRAIN EVERY DAY, EVEN IN THIS INCREDIBLE HEAT AND DURING SUMMER VACATION!
YEAH, I'M FINE!
ARE YOU SURE THE HEAT HASN'T FRIED YOUR BRAIN?

THANK YOU FOR READING CHOCOLATE CHRISTMAS AND WINK RAIN! I WROTE THESE STORIES FROM MEMORIES OF MY (NAOKO'S) OLD FRIENDS. I LOVE AND MISS THEM SO MUCH TO THEM, I DEDICATE THIS BOOK!

push
AAAAACK!!
WELL, WE DID TAKE SWIMMING, BUT US GIRLS JUST SKIPPED THE CLASS SINCE WE DIDN'T WANT THE GUYS GAWKING AT US IN OUR BATHING SUITS
JEAZ
LET ME GUESS, IN THE GIRLS GYM CLASS YOU DIDN'T DO SWIMMING. SO WHAT DID YOU ACTUALLY DO?
THE POOL WATER ALWAYS DAMAGES MY HAIR
UGH
splash
KOIZUMI!
blub
YOU'RE SO MEAN!
WHAT AN AMATEUR HERE'S HOW YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DIVE

HEY AIKAWA! WANNA BORROW ONE OF MY BATHING SUITS IN THE GIRL'S LOCKER ROOM?
AH, NO THANKS.
plop
KOIZUMI! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT YOU AREN'T SUPPOSED TO DIVE HERE?! IF YOU GET HURT AND WE HAVE TO SHUT DOWN, IT'LL BE ALL YOUR FAULT!
splash
ACK!
splish
I'LL ONLY BE SEEN IN A SWIMSUIT AT THE OCEAN
splash
PASS IT HERE, PASS IT HERE! COME ON GET BACK TO TRAINING!
blub

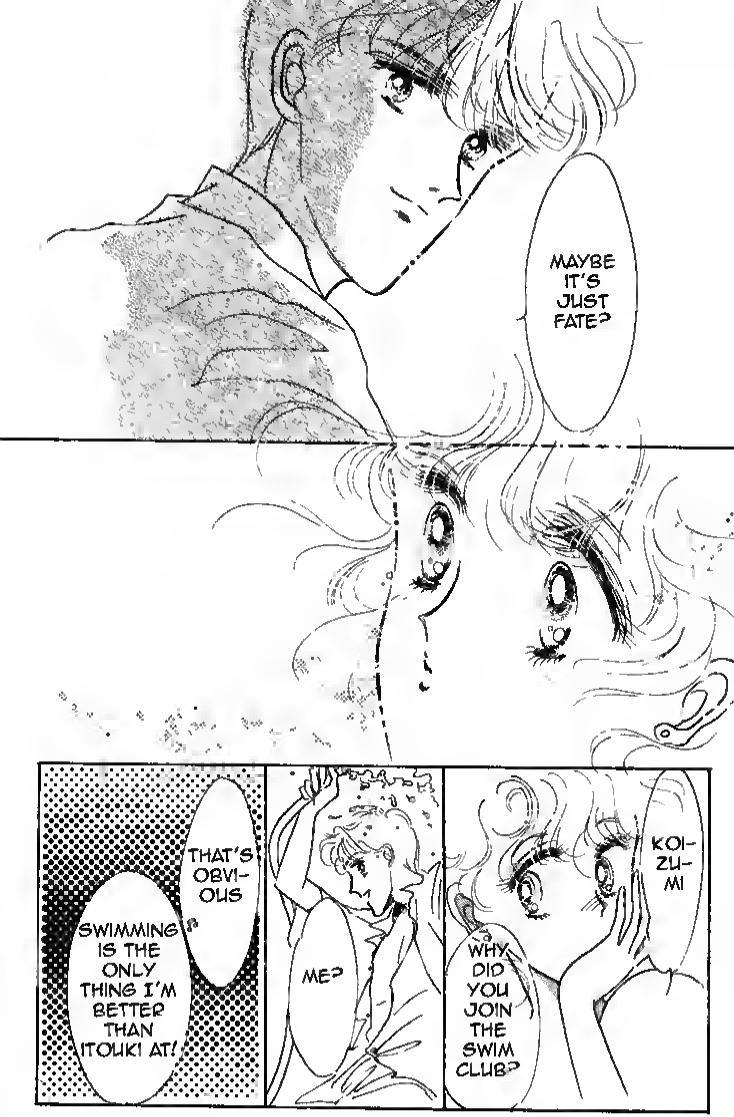

YEAH
YOU'RE RIGHT
THE THREE MUSKE-TEERS BECAME THE FOUR MUSKE-TEERS
SOME HOW IN AN IN-STANT
HEY!
AH HA HA
KYAAA!!
splash
UMINO WILL COME SO LONG AS SHE'S NOT A THIRD WHEEL!
IF THE FOUR OF US ALL GO TO THE OCEAN TO-GETHER
EVENTU-ALLY AYA AND ITOUKI WILL GO OFF ON THEIR OWN
OKAY THEN, THAT'S SETTLED

ba-dum
AND THEN WE'LL BE ALONE
BY OUR USUAL METHOD
OKAY, THIS WEEK'S POOL CLEANING RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE DETERMINED
I'M AMUSED
clap clap
YOU FOOL, THE FIRST ONE TO GET PUSHED INTO THE POOL HAS TO DO ALL THE CLEANING!
splooosh
shove
EEP
WAHH!!
WELL WELL WELL
OUR USUAL METHOD?
WAHH! MISS. UMINO, DON'T YOU KNOW THAT STANDING AT THE EDGE OF THE POOL LIKE THAT IS -VERY DANGEROUS-?!

NOW I CAN'T STOP SNEEZ-ING!
drip drip
HOW THE HECK AM I SUPPOSED TO CLEAN THIS HUGE POOL ALL BY MYSELF? THIS IS SO UNFAIR UGH

AAACHOO!
I GOT WATER UP MY NOSE!
ACK

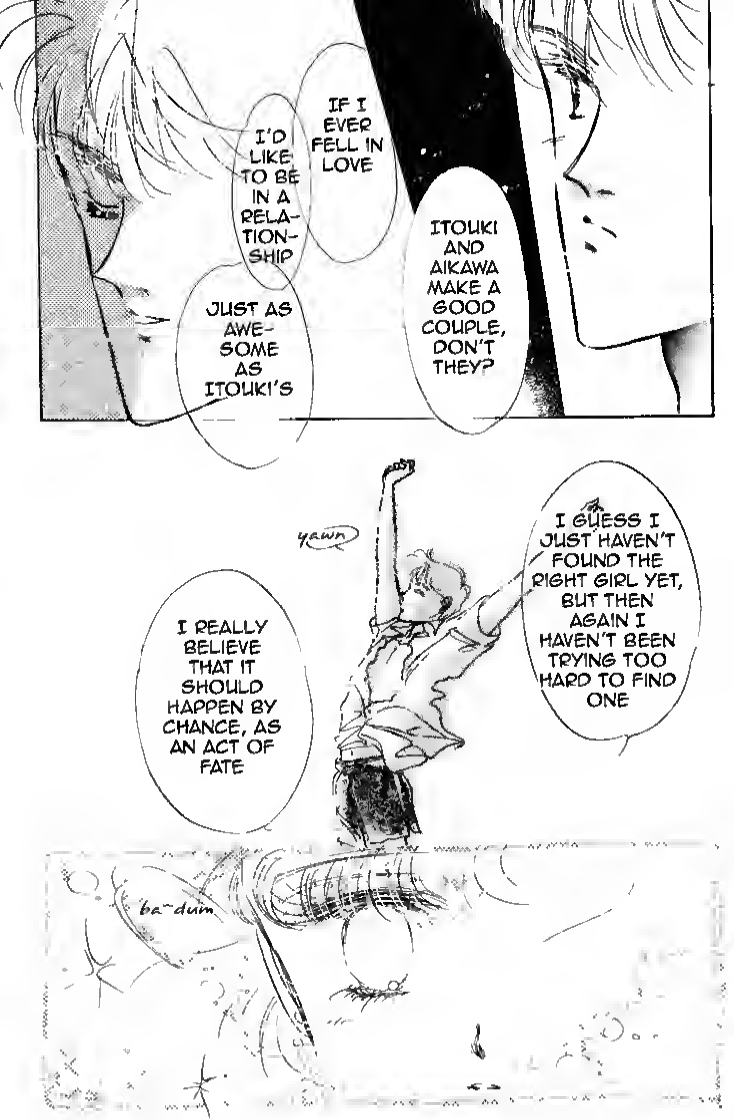
HUH, KOI-ZUMI? WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE?
JEEZ ONE STUPID DIVE AND NOW I'M STUCK ON CLEANING DUTY, THIS SUCKS
LET'S JUST RUSH THROUGH THIS AND GET OUTTA HERE
IT SEEMS LIKE WE'RE ALWAYS
CAUGHT TO-GETHER BY CHANCE, DOESN'T IT?


MAYBE IT'S JUST FATE?
KOI-ZU-MI
WHY DID YOU JOIN THE SWIM CLUB?
ME?
THAT'S OBVI-OUS
SWIMMING IS THE ONLY THING I'M BETTER THAN ITOUKI AT!

ITOUKI?
I HEARD BACK IN MIDDLE SCHOOL THAT ITOUKI HATED SWIMMING BECAUSE HE NEVER LEARNED HOW TO DO IT
BUT HE'S SO COMPETITIVE, THAT IN HIGH SCHOOL HE LEARNED HOW TO JUST TO COMPETE WITH ME
NOW HE'S AS GOOD AS ME
WHAT?
YEAH, IN MIDDLE SCHOOL
I WAS JUST LIKE THAT TOO
BUT HE NEVER TOLD ME THAT
ITOUKI
IS ONE IM-PRES-SIVE GUY

I REALLY ADMIRE HIM FOR WHO HE IS
HE'S ALMOST SUPER-HUMAN
HE'S SO SMART AND SUCH A GOOD PERSON
FOR EXAMPLE
IF SOMEONE MADE
A GIRL CRY, WHETHER OR NOT
SHE WAS HIS GIRLFRIEND
HE BELIEVED
THAT IT WAS A MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY
TO DEFEND HER
BUT
ba~dum
EVEN THOUGH THOSE SITUATIONS ARE DIFFICULT, ITOUKI ALWAYS COULD PULL THROUGH AND DO THE RIGHT THING

SWOOP
HE'S A REALLY GOOD PERSON
OHH
HMM?
KOI-ZUMI
NEVER MIND (WHAT?!)
MEN ARE SO LUCKY YOU GUYS ALWAYS SEEM TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER SO EASILY

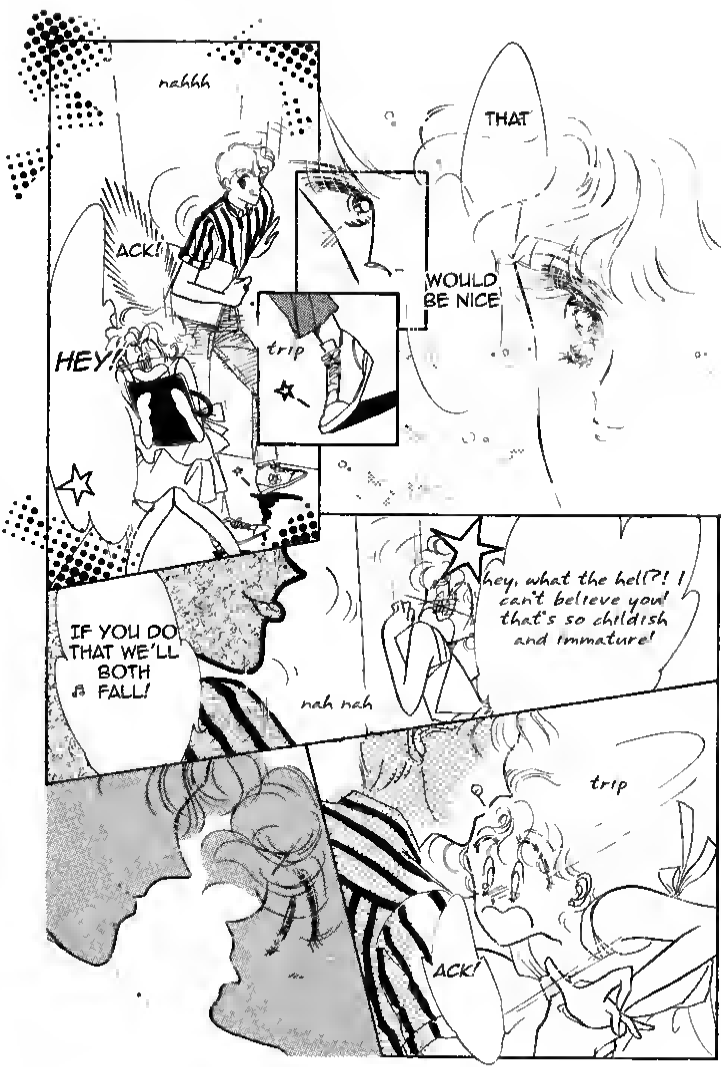

ITOUKI AND AIKAWA MAKE A GOOD COUPLE, DON'T THEY?
IF I EVER FELL IN LOVE
I'D LIKE TO BE IN A RELATIONSHIP
JUST AS AWESOME AS ITOUKI'S
yawn
I GUESS I JUST HAVEN'T FOUND THE RIGHT GIRL YET, BUT THEN AGAIN I HAVEN'T BEEN TRYING TOO HARD TO FIND ONE
I REALLY BELIEVE THAT IT SHOULD HAPPEN BY CHANCE, AS AN ACT OF FATE
ba-dum

MARIN, YOU'RE OUT LATE!
WAS KOI A HELP TO YOU? IT SEEMED LIKE A LOT OF WORK TO DO ALONE
THEY'RE A GOOD COUPLE
HEY
LET'S GO HOME WITHOUT MARIN, AS A PUNISHMENT FOR KEEPING YOU LATE!
YOU GUYS HAVE IT SO GOOD,— GETTING TO GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL TOGETHER
SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST CHANGE SCHOOLS?
I WILL!
DUMMY
JERK

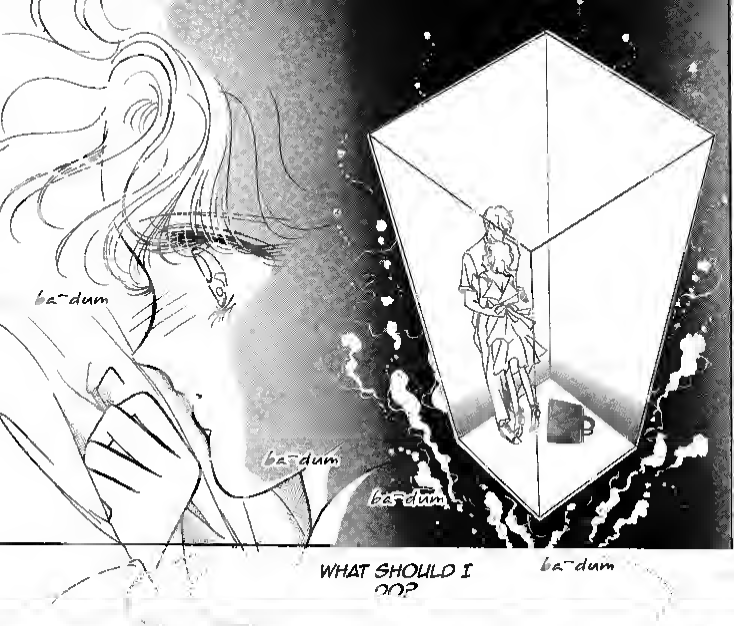
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
AREN'T YOU GOING HOME?
MARIN AND I ARE GOING SHOPPING FOR OUR OCEAN TRIP!
MARIN, LET'S GO!
WHAT! BUT WHY? MAYBE HAJI WILL COME TOO, THEN IT'LL BE THE THREE, I MEAN, FOUR OF US, RIGHT?
AYA, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, IF YOU WANNA WALK HOME WITH ITOUKI, WE'LL SHOP SOME OTHER TIME!
AH
ah ha ha ha.
chatter
EIKO ACADEMY MOCK ENTRANCE EXAMS
pour
SEE YA!
BU-HAJI! HEY HANG ON!
BUT YOU GUYS HAVE ALREADY PLANNED IT. GIRLS ONLY - HAVE FUN WITH MARIN!

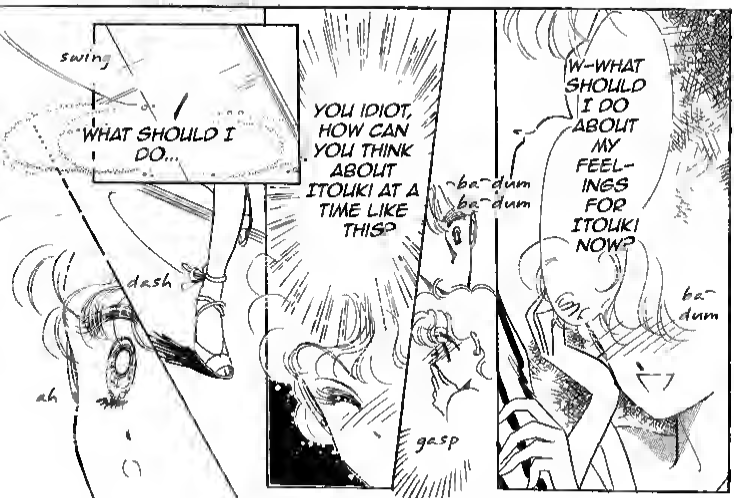
HEY WAIT UP ITOU!
bonk bonk bonk
GOING TO TAKE THE STAIRS AGAIN?
MAYBE THAT MEANS
LAST TIME YOU WALKED RIGHT PAST THE ELEVATOR, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS RAINING OUTSIDE
HUH?
WE'RE GOING HOME ALONE TOGETHER?
BUT WHY
IS THAT?

LAST TIME
I HAD A REAL LY WEIRD DREAM
THERE WERE LONG STAIRS, GOING STRAIGHT INTO THE SKY
AND...
THEY JUST KEPT GOING HIGHER AND HIGHER
swing
FOR-EVER
REALLY? WELL THEN, ALLOW ME TO INTERPRET YOUR DREAM FOR YOU! IT MEANS THAT...
SOME-THING GOOD WILL HAPPEN
SOME-THING GOOD?


nahhh
ACK!
HEY!
trip
THAT
WOULD BE NICE
hey, what the hell?! I can't believe you! that's so childish and immature!
IF YOU DO THAT WE'LL BOTH FALL!
nah nah
trip
ACK!

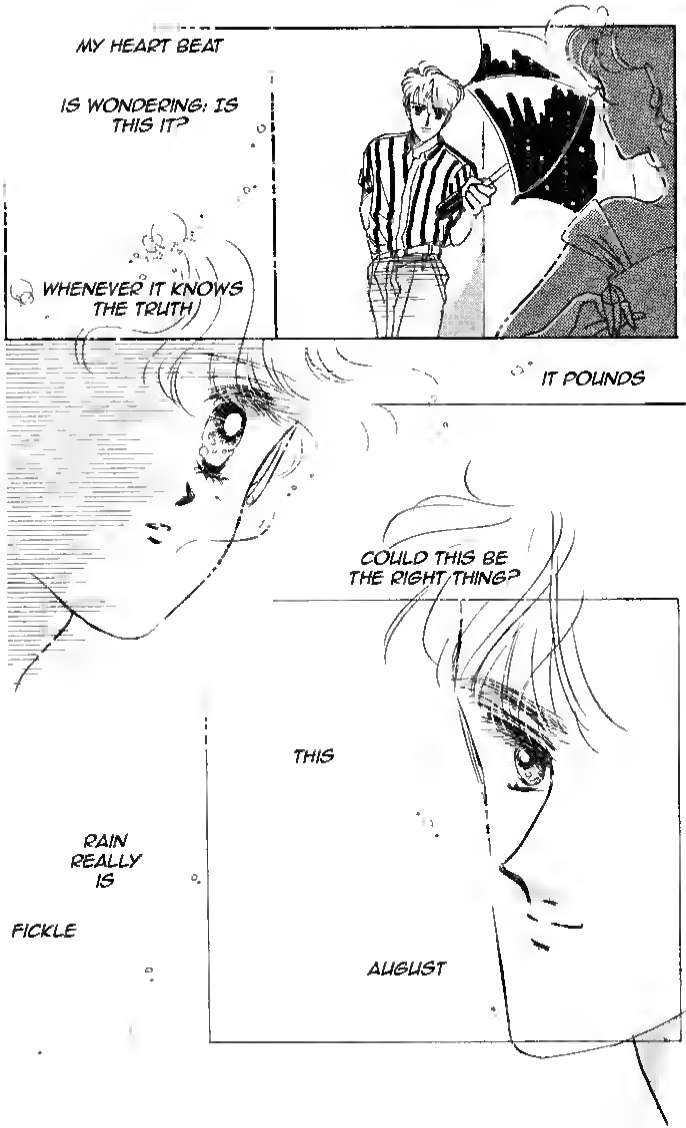
ba-dum
ba-dum
twish


ba-dum
ba-dum
ba-dum
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
ba-dum


swing
WHAT SHOULD I DO...
dash
ah
YOU IDIOT, HOW CAN YOU THINK ABOUT ITOUKI AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
gasp
ba-dum
ba-dum
W-WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT MY FEELINGS FOR ITOUKI NOW?
ba-dum

pour
RAIN IS SO
CRUEL
THIS FICKL E
HE LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE I'VE MET BEFORE
WHENEVER YOU'RE AROUND, MISS UMINO, YOU SEEM TO MAKE IT RAIN OUT-SIDE
MAYBE YOU'RE A RAIN DANCER*?

*NOTE PHRASE USED HERE IS "AMEONNA", A WOMAN WHOSE PRESENCE CAUSES RAIN


MY HEART BEAT
IS WONDERING: IS THIS IT?
WHENEVER IT KNOWS THE TRUTH
IT POUNDS
COULD THIS BE THE RIGHT THING?
THIS
RAIN REALLY IS
FICKLE
AUGUST

AH HA HA, OH I FORGOT AGAIN...
WHAT?!
WHERE'S MY UMBRELLA?
giggle
OKAY, HOW ABOUT YOU MAKE IT UP BY SHARING YOUR UMBRELLA WITH ME TODAY?
OKAY?
IT FEELS LIKE IT'S
CARRYING ME AWAY
FIRE ESCAPE
HOW ABOUT THE FOUR OF US WALK HOME TOGETHER? I THINK THAT'S BEST
WELL, I MEAN, I WANT TO GO SHOPPING WITH MARIN, BUT I ALSO WANTED TO WALK HOME WITH YOU.
IT'S OKAY, WE CAN DO THAT LATER. YOU CAN STILL CATCH UP WITH MARIN IF YOU TRY!

MAYBE WE'LL GET A CHANCE TO GET THEM TOGETHER AT THE BEACH
HEY..DOESN'T IT SEEM LIKE MARIN AND KOIZUMI HAVE A CRUSH ON EACH OTHER?
MAYBE THOSE TWO ALREADY WALKED HOME TOGETHER
I GUESS IF THEY BOTH REALLY LIKE EACH OTHER, THAT'S FINE
BUT IF THAT'S NOT THE CASE, THEN I THINK IT'D BE BEST FOR MARIN TO FIND HERSELF A NICE BOY, A REALLY GOOD PERSON. SHE SHOULD HAVE HIGHER STANDARDS
IT'LL BE OKAY
DON'T WORRY, I'LL KEEP AN EYE ON HER

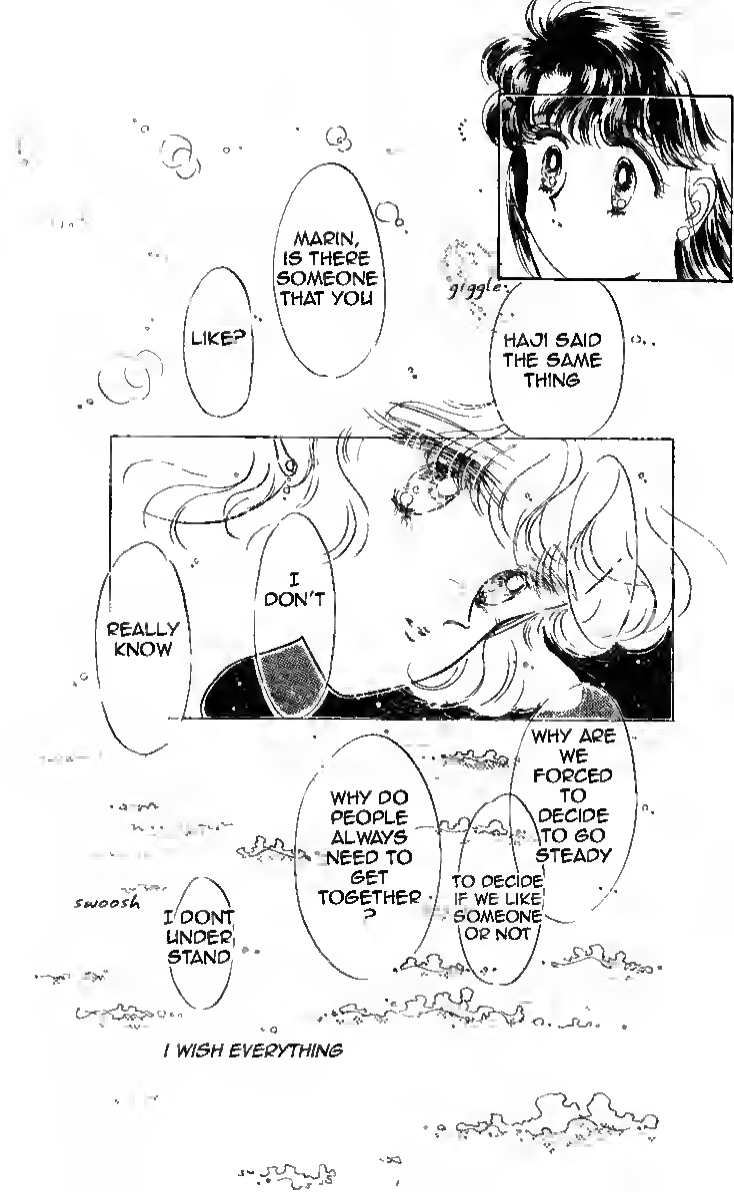
twish
grab
MY PULSE IS GOING OUT OF CONTROL
ba~dum ba~dum
hug
ba~dum

ba-dum
IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL
ba-dum
gasp
ba-dum
OH, THAT'S JUST HOW IT ALWAYS IS..
IS GOING SO FAST
ba-dum
YOUR PULSE
ba-dum
HOW CAN I BE SHOCKED?
MAYBE I AM THE ONE WHO IS THE THIRD WHEEL
COMING BETWEEN THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE THREE MUSKEETERS"

ba-dum
ba-dum
YOU'RE NOT A THIRD WHEEL
BUT YOU'RE NOT COMING BE-TWEEN US
YOU'RE TER-RIBLE
dash
IT FEELS LIKE
sigh
I'VE STUM-BLED ACROSS A LONG FORGOT-TEN
PHOTO ALBUM
AND HAVE STARTED LEAFING THROUGH THE PAGES

KOIZUMI
HOW CAN I BE SHOCKED?
YOU'RE TEASING ME
MARIN!
swing
HE WENT HOME, SO LET'S GO SHOPPING!
WHERE'S ITOUKI?
ba-dum ba-dum
AYA!
ba-dum
ARE YOU ALONE? OH I'M SO RELIEVED, I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!
I'M SO SORRY I THINK I MAY HAVE MADE THE WRONG CHOICE AFTER ALL.
ITOUKI

I'VE BROKEN UP OUR LITTLE CLIQUE
I'M THE ONE WHO HAS DONE SOMETHING BAD
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
STOLE MY THUNDER
I STOLE ALL OF YOUR THUNDER
YOU GUYS SEEM LIKE YOU'D MAKE SUCH A GOOD COUPLE IF YOU HOOKED UP..
BUT I'M SHOCKED, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY GO HOME WITH KOIZUMI
DOESN'T MEAN A GOOD RELATIONSHIP COMES EASY FOR EVERYONE ELSE..
HEY AYA, JUST BECAUSE IT'S WORKING OUT SO NICELY FOR YOU


MARIN, IS THERE SOMEONE THAT YOU
LIKE?
giggle.
HAJI SAID THE SAME THING
I DON'T
REALLY KNOW
WHY ARE WE FORCED TO DECIDE TO GO STEADY
WHY DO PEOPLE ALWAYS NEED TO GET TOGETHER ?
TO DECIDE IF WE LIKE SOMEONE OR NOT
swoosh
I DONT UNDER STAND
I WISH EVERYTHING

WOULD JUST STAY THE WAY
MARIN
YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD HAJI AND KOIZUMI ALL TO YOURSELF, YOU KNOW
THEY ARE
WHEN THE THREE OF US WERE STILL THE MUSKETEERS, I USED TO WORRY THAT HAJI WAS REALLY ONLY INTERESTED IN YOU, IT MADE ME REALLY UNCOMFORTABLE
IT'S STRANGE, I'M SORRY
WHAT? AYA
BUT IT'S ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME YOU AND HE SEEM TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER THE MOST, AND GET TO SPEND THE MOST TIME TOGETHER
BUT NOW YOU'VE GOTTA MAKE A CHOICE

DO YOU LIKE KOIZUMI? OR HAJI?
MARIN, I BELIEVE THAT A MUCH GREATER PART OF YOU HOLDS FEELINGS FOR HAJI.
AYA?!

swing
AYA
HAS FEELINGS FOR HAJI
A BIGGER PART OF YOU
FEELINGS FOR HAJI
ba-dum
ba-dum
ba-dum

WHAT?
MARIN
LETS'S GO SHOPPING FOR OUR OCEAN TRIP!
REALLY AM OBLIVIOUS
MAYBE IT'D BE BEST IF YOU WENT ON THE OCEAN TRIP INSTEAD OF ME, KOIZUMI?
I THINK
THAT MAYBE
FOR THE OCEAN TRIP
I THINK IT MIGHT BE BETTER IF I SAT THIS TRIP OUT
THAT'S WHAT I'VE DECIDED

HUH?
slam
HMPH
ARE YOU UPSET?
ABOUT WHAT?
WHATEVER
IT'LL BE FINE. WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME MY OPINION?
WHY CAN'T YOU BE STRAIGHT FORWARD WITH ME ..
REA LLY ?
IF YOU KEEP PUSHING YOUR LUCK
I WON'T CALL YOU ANYMORE
WHAT AM I TO YOU, ANYWAY ?
JUST ITOU, THE REPLACEMENT?

I
I TOLD YOU I DION'T HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE WITH RELATIONSHIPS
I LIKED IT BETTER
WHEN IT WAS JUST US
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU, MISS UMINO?
SO THERE'S NO POINT IN YOU COMING TO THE OCEAN
YOU'VE BEEN LYING TO ME ALL ALONG

JUST ONE MORE SEMESTER TO PUT UP WITH
JUST ONE MORE WEEK OF THIS
HE KNEW THAT I LIKED ITOUKI ALL ALONG? BUT HOW DID HE FIND OUT...
click
KOIZU...
bzz
bzz
bzzt
AH...
gasp
pat
ding
dong
WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU? YOU DIDN'T SHOW UP AT CRAM SCHOOL OR AT SWIM CLUB
KOIZUMI KNEW ABOUT THIS?!

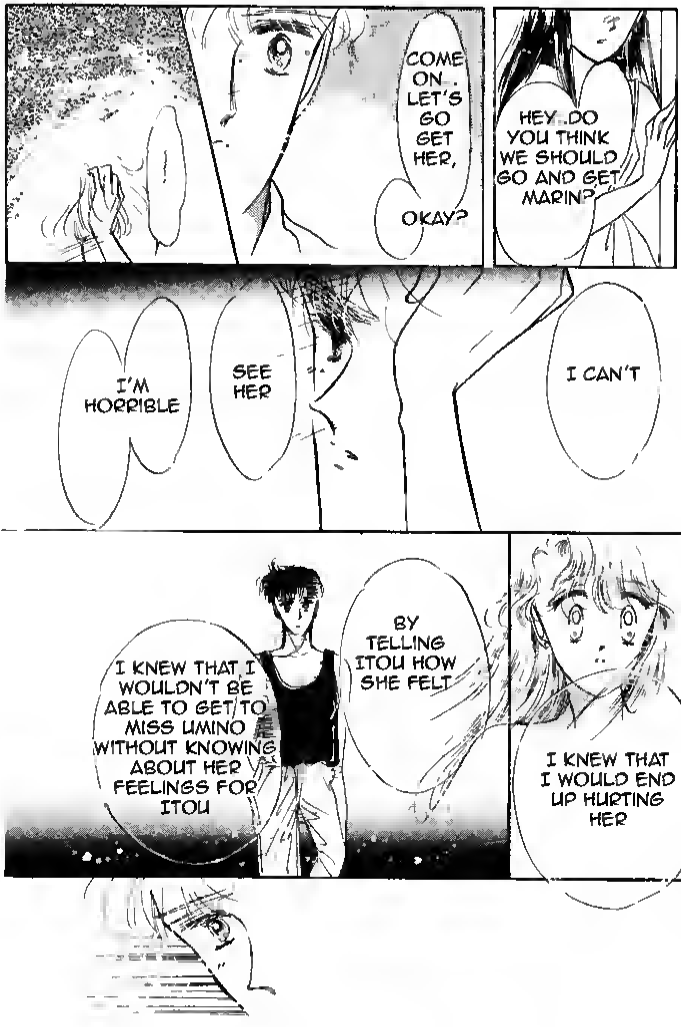
I GUESS EVERYTHING BETWEEN AYA AND ITOUKI IS GOOD, THEN
HMM, I SEE
NO... WHY WOULD SHE?
DID SHE SAY SOMETHING TO YOU?
I'M RELIEVED
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
KOI SAID THAT YOU WEREN'T COMING WITH US ON THE OCEAN TRIP?
I DON'T KNOW, I THINK HE'S JUST ANGRY WITH ME RIGHT NOW
THIS
MAY ALL BE BEHIND US
MAYBE
NOW
THERE'S STILL A CHANCE

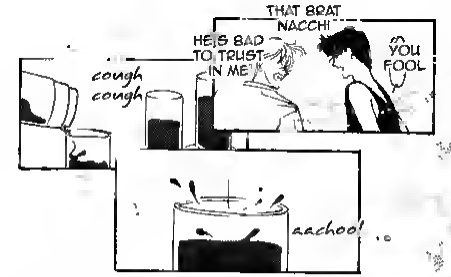
I'M GOING TO CATCH UP WITH
KOIZUMI AND AYA
I WISH I COULD GET ALONG WITH THEM AS EASILY AS YOU DO
A HA HA HA
KYAA !
COME TO CRAM SCHOOL TODAY
AIKAWA ISN'T MAD AT YOU AT ALL
YOU'RE COMING TODAY EVEN IF I HAVE TO DRAG YOU (BESIDES, YOU-KNOW-WHO WILL BE ABSENT)
DON'T MAKE ME FORCE YOU

I THOUGHT YOU'D BE UPSET IF I TOLD YOU I WASNT COMING ON THE OCEAN TRIP
ITOUKI YOU'RE SUCH A NICE GUY
SO, HE DOESN'T WANT TO SEE ME EITHER
THESE GUYS WERE SIMILAR
I COULD THINK
I DON'T KNOW HOW
KYAAA!
OKAY! SO, ARE YOU GOING TO COME ON THE OCEAN TRIP WITH US NOW?!
KOIZUMI AND ITOUKI ARE TOTALLY DIFFERENT
I DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE WITH KOIZUMI
BUT IT'S FINE
OKAY ?
I'LL GIVE YOU DIRECTIONS
WE'RE GOING TO GO THERE THIS WEEKEND! IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO CHANGE YOUR MIND
YEAH
I'M SORRY, IT SOUNDS LIKE FUN,
BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL BE COMING ON THE TRIP

tick
tick
tick
pour
plip
plip
OF COURSE, WE FINALLY GET TO GO ON OUR TRIP, AND THERE'S A HUGE TYPHOON BLOWING IN!
THIS STINKS
twoosh
fwoooooosh
pour
gasp
ba-dum
ba-dum
MAN, IT'S SO BORING BEING HERE, JUST THE TWO OF US ALONE!
ding dong
ack!
I WONDER IF MARIN HAS FINISHED ALL OF HER SUMMER READING LIST HOMEWORK BY NOW?
sigh

I THOUGHT I'D STOP IN AND SAY HELLO IS ITOU AROUND?
YOU?
ACK! WHAT IF IT'S MY MOM, WHAT WILL WE DO? HAJI, HIDE!
OKAY!
thump
I'LL DUCK IN THE CLOSET!
WHAT?! KOIZUMI?!
thump
WHERE'S MARIN? ISN'T SHE WITH YOU?
DID YOU GET DIRECTIONS TO HERE FROM HER ON THE PHONE OR SOMETHING?
ITOU'S BROTHER SHOWED ME
YEAH. NAKK\ LOOKS UP TO KOI
GUESS I'M NOT THE DUMB ONE AFTER ALL?
YOU THOUGHT SHE WAS ALONE WITH ME?
nah


COME ON. LET'S GO GET HER, OKAY?
HEY..DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD GO AND GET MARIN?
I'M HORRIBLE
SEE HER
I CAN'T
I KNEW THAT I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GET TO MISS UMINO WITHOUT KNOWING ABOUT HER FEELINGS FOR ITOU
BY TELLING ITOU HOW SHE FELT
I KNEW THAT I WOULD END UP HURTING HER



FOR THE GIRL I LOVE

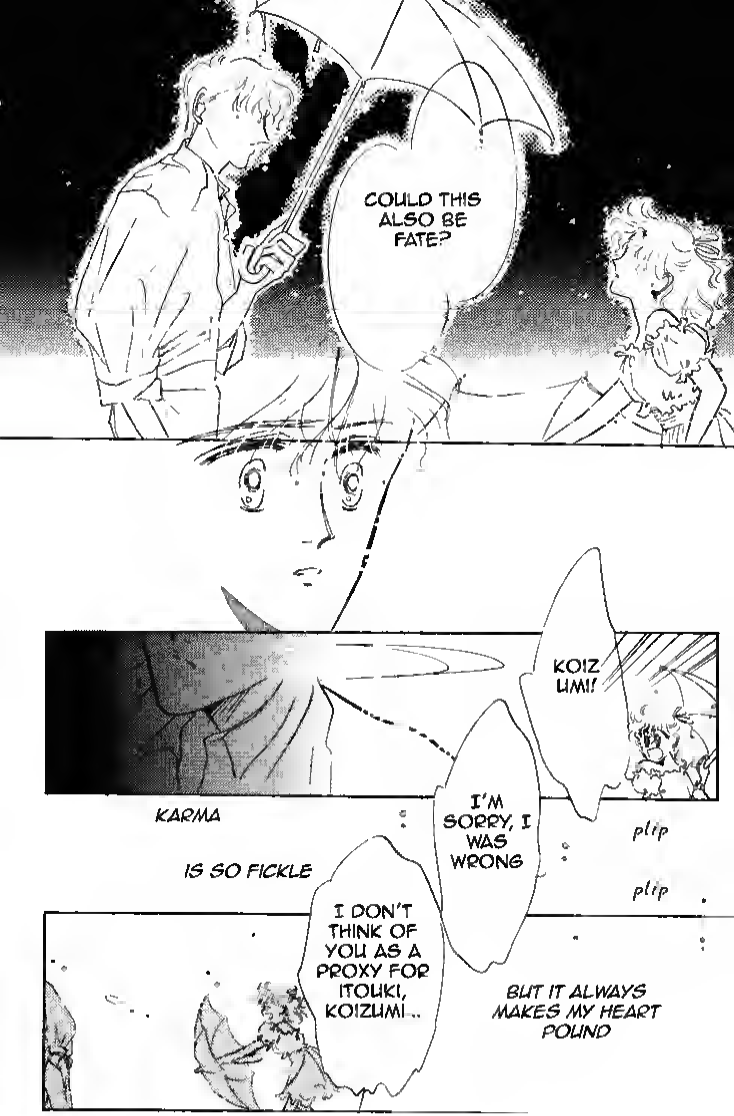
THE ONE I'M ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT...

I HAVE HURT MARIN
pour
DO YOU THINK SHE'S MAD
YEAH
HA HA HA NO WAY
YOU'RE SO MEAN! HAJIII!
YEAH
pour
I BET THOSE TWO ARE AT THE OCEAN BY NOW
AH HA HA
AND NOW FOR THE WEATHER FORECAST. A TYPHOON IS PREDICTED TO

IF I EVER
FALL IN LOVE
I HOPE IT'LL BE
SOMEONE
LIKE THAT
pour
plip
thunder
thunder
UNTIL NOW,
I GUESS I JUST
HADN'T FOUND THE
RIGHT ONE
UNTIL NOW
ba-dum
THE RAIN
IS ANGRY JUST
LIKE
THE OCEAN
pour
thunder
I WANT
TO SEE
HIM
SMELLS NICE

ba-dum
badum
badum
AND TELL HIM I WANT MY UMBRELLA BACK
I'LL GIVE HIM A CALL
click
beep
beep
beep
HUH?!
HUH? YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YOSHIYUKI!? HE WENT TO THE OCEAN, EVEN IN ALL THIS RAIN
I WANT TO HEAR KOIZUMI'S VOICE
MAYBE I'VE BEEN TOO MEAN TO HIM AND HAVE LED HIM ON.

I NEVER SAY THE IMPORTANT THINGS I WANT TO SHARE
I NEVER
MARIN
I'M GOING TO GO VISIT WITH AYA!!
THE OCEAN !!
slam
HEY, MARIN! WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING AT THIS HOUR?
I'VE SPENT THE WHOLE SUMMER HOLED UP IN MY HOUSE
pour
IF I DONT RUSH THERE
I'VE GOTTA HURRY
THE SUMMER WILL END WITHOUT ME

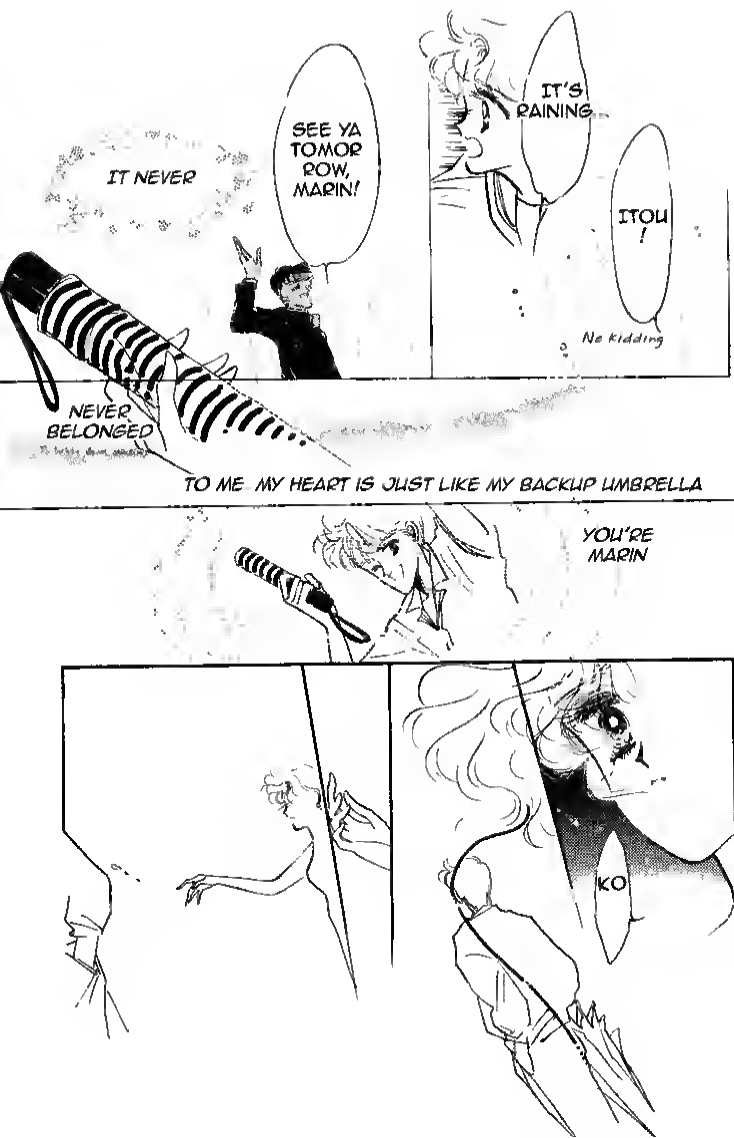

COULD THIS ALSO BE FATE?
KOIZUMI!
KARMA
IS SO FICKLE
I'M SORRY, I WAS WRONG
plip
plip
I DON'T THINK OF YOU AS A PROXY FOR ITOUKI, KOIZUMI..
BUT IT ALWAYS MAKES MY HEART POUND

ba~dum
I LIKE YOU
THOUGHT THAT
I NEVER ONCE
ba~dum
I LIKE YOU SO MUCH
ba~dum
I'M SORRY FOR UPSETTING YOU
MAYBE THIS IS FATE
I- I SEE
YOU'RE CRUEL
YOU CAN'T SERIOUSLY BELIEVE THAT! FATE DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS!

I ALREADY KNEW THAT YOU HATED ELEVATORS
THE DAY I BORROWED YOUR UMBRELLA, I DIDN'T JUST HAPPEN TO SHOW UP TO SAVE YOU BY CHANCE
I ALREADY KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU
ITOU HAD TOLD ME YOU DIDN'T LIKE THEM
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT A TERRIBLE PERSON I AM, SO DON'T APOLOGIZE TO ME
ALL ALONG I'VE BEEN THE LIAR!
IF
IF I WERE EVER GOING TO BE A BETTER PERSON THAN ITOU, I WOULD HAVE TOLD YOU BY NOW
WE

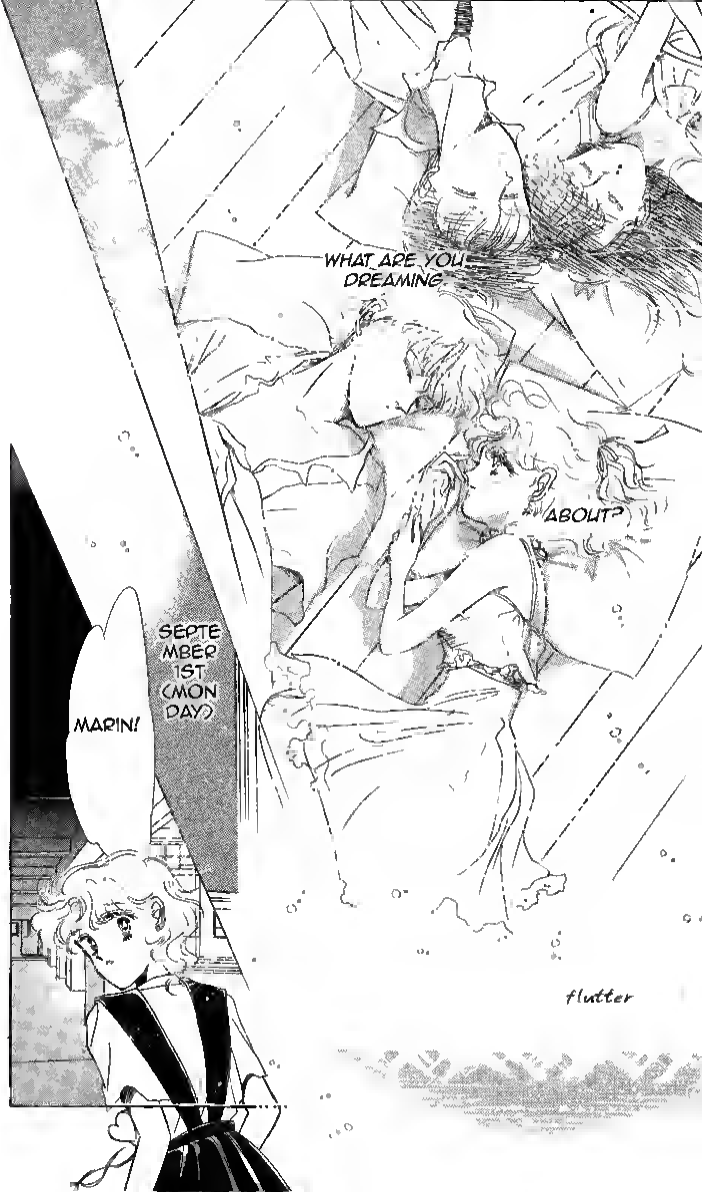
IDIOT
I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF YOU AS ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS, DIDN'T YOU KNOW?
smooth
IF YOU KEEP RANTING LIKE THIS, I'LL GIVE YOU ONE OF AIKAWA'S DOUBLE PUNCHES
I'M BAD FOR YOU
SHOULDN'T BE TOGETHER ANYMORE
IS BREAKING swing
MY HEART
IF YOU CRY, ITOUKI WILL GET MAD AT ME
grip
DON'T CRY, MARIN. IT'LL UPSET ITOUKI
REALLY THINK ABOUT ITOUKI IS.
plop
plop
WHAT I REALLY
THE TRUTH IS
THE TRUTH ABOUT ITOUKI IS

chatter
chatter
jingle
swing
chatter
chatter
chatter
slip
badum
chatter
chatter
badum
swing
YOU'RE SILLY. HAHAHA
badum


IT'S RAINING
ITOU!
No kidding
SEE YA TOMOR ROW, MARIN!
IT NEVER
NEVER BELONGED
TO ME MY HEART IS JUST LIKE MY BACKUP UMBRELLA
YOU'RE MARIN
KO

ITOU'S
KOIZUMI
HMM ?

MARIN!
IT'S
NOTHING
WHAT COULD I HAVE DONE?
KOIZUMI, YOU'RE SO DISTANT
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY TO YOU?


WHAT ARE YOU DREAMING ABOUT?
flutter
SEPTEMBER 1ST (MONDAY?
MARIN!

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE AT SCHOOL TODAY! (I'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERYWHERE FOR YOU!)
YOU'RE SUCH A TEASE
ARE YOU DONE FOR THE LAST?
AIKAWA IS WAITING FOR US OUTSIDE THE GATE TO WALK HOME
SORRY
IT'S TOO BAD
BUT I'M GOING TO GET SOME TEA WITH SOME OF THE GIRLS FROM CLASS TODAY
DANG, LOOKS LIKE RAIN AND I FORGOT MY UMBRELLA
SERIOUSLY?
OKAY, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT. HAVE FUN
RAINING AGAIN? SERIOUSLY?
ITOUK!

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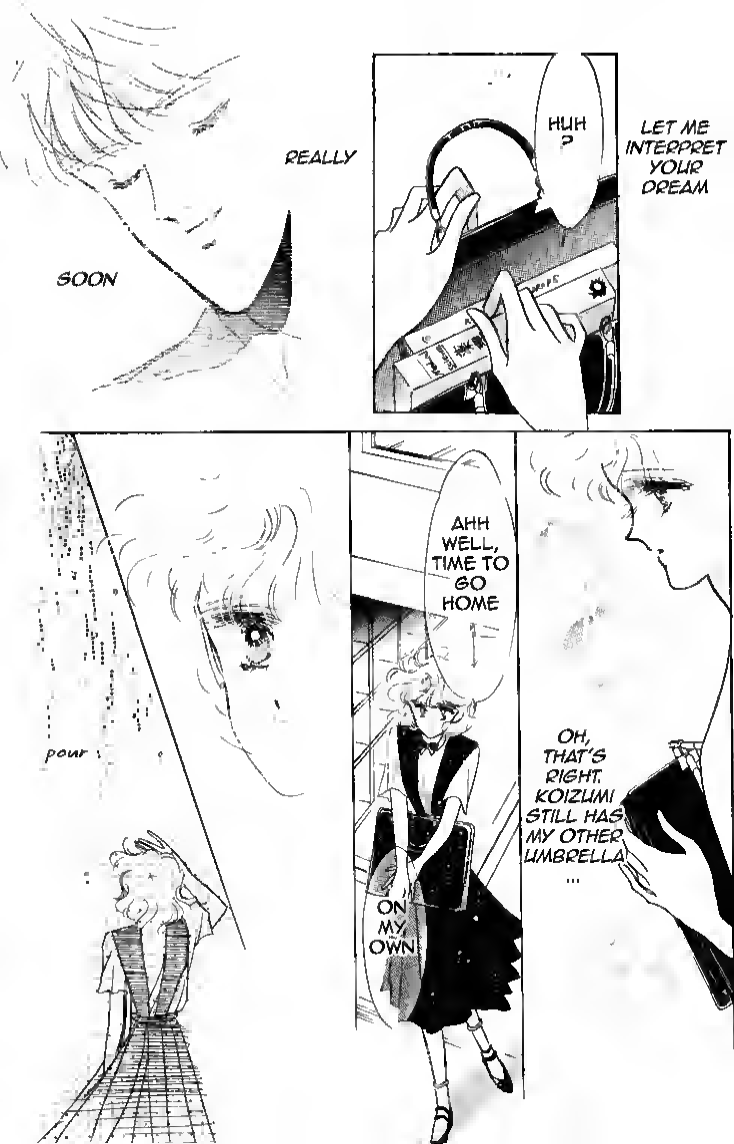
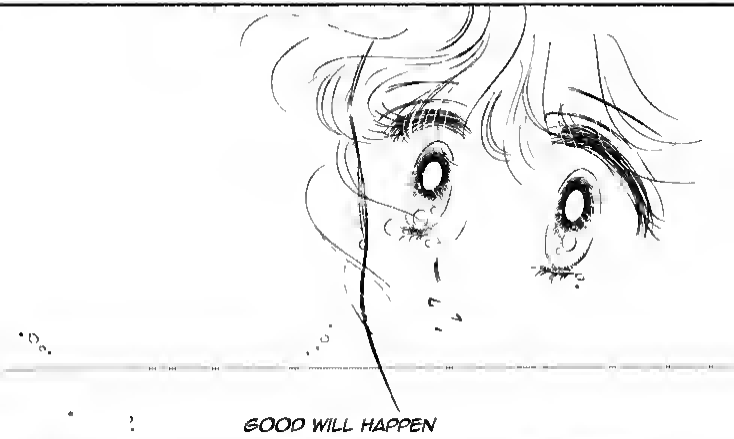
thunder
AHH
IT'S A NEW SEMESTER, BUT STILL NOTHING GOOD HAS HAPPENED YET
ITOUKI, YOU TAKE IT
I DON'T NEED THIS UMBRELLA FOR ANYTHING
YOU SHOULDN'T LET AYA GET WET
YOU KNOW!
RIGHT?
THANK YOU

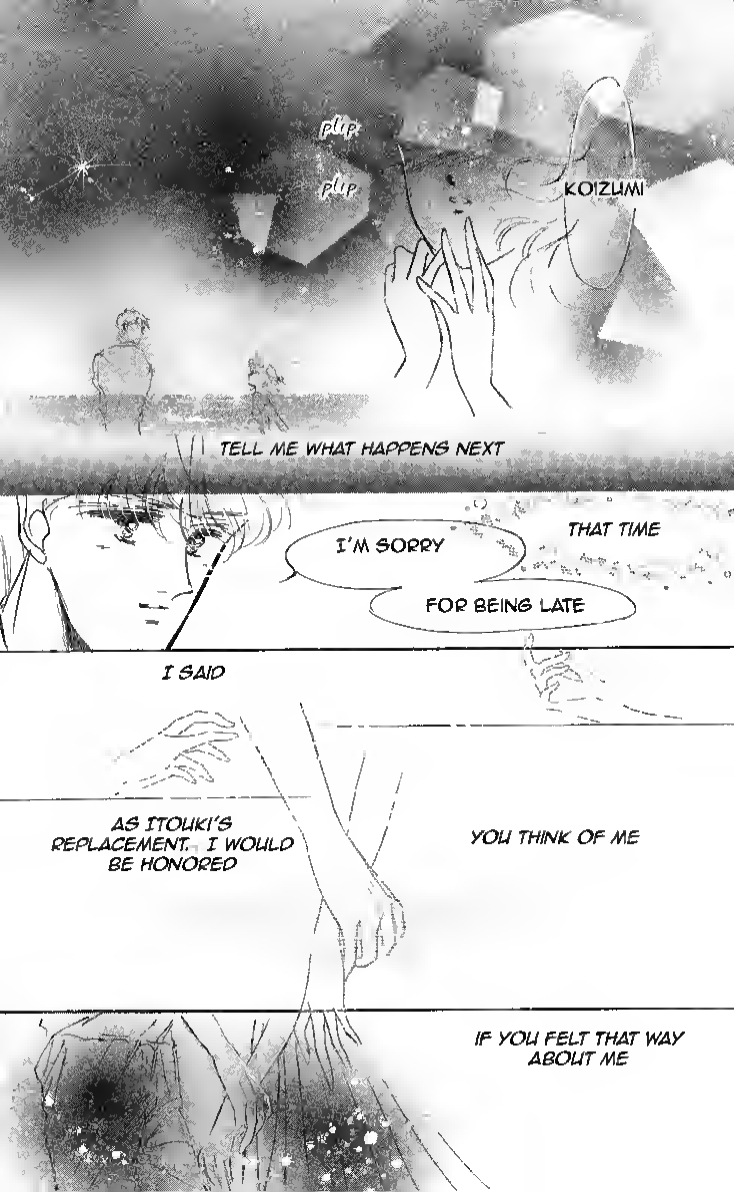

SOON
REALLY
HUH ?
LET ME INTERPRET YOUR DREAM
pour
AHH WELL, TIME TO GO HOME
ON MY OWN
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. KOIZUMI STILL HAS MY OTHER UMBRELLA
...

pour

VERY SOON SOMETHING



GOOD WILL HAPPEN


PLIP
PLIP
KOIZUMI
TELL ME WHAT HAPPENS NEXT
I'M SORRY
THAT TIME
FOR BEING LATE
I SAID
AS ITOUKI'S REPLACEMENT, I WOULD BE HONORED
YOU THINK OF ME
IF YOU FELT THAT WAY ABOUT ME

THE RAIN
FROM THE OCEAN
TICKLES
MY EARS
KOIZUMI, A GOOD THING REALLY HAS HAPPENED
★★ THE END ★★